



VIRTUAL WORLD: CLOSE COMBAT MAGE

BOOK 02

Butterfly Blue

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

Virtual World: Close Combat Mage

(网游之近战法师)

by

Butterfly Blue

(蝴蝶蓝)

Synopsis

Due to a mistake on his student's part, a super Martial Artist had received a wrong class in an online game and had become a mage. He who was used to curbing violence with violence and using strength to subdue strength could only make the best out of his mistake. Taking on a new lease in life, he became a violent close combat mage. When strength and magic came perfectly together, a new gaming path had been opened by him!

Acknowledgement

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English Translation by Celascion, edits by Mugi @ [Gravity Tales](#)

ePub conversion by Lisa Hayes @ [Hasseno Blog](#)

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Chapter 101 - Woman! Oh, woman!

Gu Fei might be clueless regarding the online gaming scene, but only Xiaoyu would still not understand the surrounding crowd's intention after watching them try to outbid one another. These people clearly wished to use Gu Fei's ignorance of the game to get a sweet deal off of him. It truly was not an exaggeration for Xi Xiaotian to say that this was swindling. With her hitting the nail on the head, this bunch of players could not help but display an ugly expression on their faces.

Everyone came to the conclusion that Gu Fei had squatted there without saying a word not because he was an idiot but most likely because he was pretending to be clueless. Not one felt good after realizing that they had just made a fool of themselves.

While many left to save some face, a good portion of the duplicitous players still remained. All of them were presently staring hatefully at Gu Fei.

Many players' emotional quotient had become low after being immersed in this VR game for quite some time. Feelings of shame and embarrassment were as intense in Parallel World as they were in reality. However, unlike in reality, they were not bounded by common sense or social obligation in-game.

If I did not like you, I could just beat you up; if I felt irked by your presence, I could just bash you up... Sometimes, the world in online games was just this unreasonable. Through this full-immersion VRMMO, all this became a bit more realistic. Still, the rules of the world had remained the same. Strength dictated who was in the right; combat solved everything. These were truer in online games.

Strength took many forms and shapes. It could be an individual's prowess, a guild's force... or a crowd's might born at a certain time and in a certain place.

On November 21, 1345, in Yunduan City's Cloud Pattern Main Street, which the players had dubbed as the Peddlers' Street, such a mighty crowd formed – or perhaps the players in this crowd only thought that they were mighty. After all, the gauge of strength was relative. In any case, this throng of players at Peddlers' Street definitely thought that their superiority in number would make the opponent unable to match up with them. Gu Fei, who had just stood up from squatting in a corner, was of course the opponent that this crowd was referring.

As was said before, a good portion of the 'rational' players immediately left the area upon noticing that their intention to cheat the noob had been discovered. Only this group of 'irrational' players remained after having their plan foiled and subsequently feeling that they had been had instead.

The surrounding players now had another purpose besides their initial one; it was to stop Gu Fei from leaving so that they could have a good 'talk' with him.

Gu Fei felt vexed. Just like any novel's main character programmed to uphold justice, he demanded loudly, "What do you lot want?"

No one spoke a word and just continued glaring at him. This group of people that had united due to their common interest only interacted with one another through eye contact and had yet to choose a representative.

"If there's nothing else, I'm leaving," Gu Fei said.

"Wait a moment!" someone stopped him. The group scattered, blocking off all possible exits for Gu Fei. Their similar mentality and intention made it possible for them to tacitly coordinate with one another.

Gu Fei coldly regarded the men before him. This group seemed to be composed of the violent sort that Gu Fei loved encountering the most. Although his father liked taking care of him quite physically

using the excuse of them being a family of kung fu practitioners, he would always stop Gu Fei from laying his hands on other people. Gu Fei had even thought that he would never get a chance to physically express himself until he had his own son. Therefore, he was really thankful to online games, Parallel World, and the great author, Blue Butterfly, for making his dream come true.

Gu Fei beckoned Xi Xiaotian nearer using his pinky finger.

“What?” Xi Xiaotian asked, after getting close enough to him.

“What’re the rules of PvP? Give me a quick rundown,” Gu Fei requested.

Everyone before him was in an uproar. They all thought to themselves, He’s not only a noob, but also a super arrogant noob!

Xi Xiaotian froze in place, not knowing what to say. After a bit, she blurted out, “PK value increases by 1 point with every kill.”

“That’s not it!” Gu Fei rolled his eyes at her, saying, “I already know that. What I’m asking is if there’s any way to not increase my PK value.” After carefully considering Fleeting Smile’s words before, he had somewhat gleaned that there was a way to kill players without incurring PK points. Gu Fei wanted to inquire more about it back then, but he somehow forgot it in the midst of their conversation. Afterward, he also procrastinated from checking the game’s official website for information about it.

“No PK points will be awarded if you’re retaliating after someone attacks you. Killing players with PK value won’t add PK points either,” Xi Xiaotian explained.

“Are you sure that killing players with PK value won’t incur me PK points?” Gu Fei asked, skeptical. He doubted that none of the Past Deeds’ players he had bombarded with Descending Wheel of Flames twice in Yueye City was without PK value.

“That’s only when you don’t have PK value yourself; it’s a different case altogether if you do,” Xi Xiaotian clarified.

Gu Fei understood now. With that, he gripped his sword firmly and faced the players surrounding him, “Come at me!”

The crowd was astounded. No one made a move as everyone thought, Planning to kill us without incurring PK points? How can we give you such a sweet deal? We’ll definitely not attack first. The surrounding players seemed to have forgotten that they were the aggressors and Gu Fei was the retaliator. In their minds right now, he was the one surrounding them and was preparing to take his anger out on them.

With the opponents not taking up his challenge, Gu Fei felt quite regretful. Although he actually loved PvPing, he was not an unreasonable person. Thus, he could only hope that someone among the crowd would get impatient and strike him first.

At times like this, Gu Fei could not help but miss Yueye City’s PvP atmosphere. He still wondered why The Black Hand mercenary group wanted to rob him. How are they doing right now? Sorrow flowed through Gu Fei. Only three hours had passed since he left Yueye City, yet he was already missing it. He let loose a sigh, “If you guys don’t have the guts to fight with me, then scram!”

His confident words and sorrowful expression unintentionally heightened the crowd’s suspicion. These players circumstantially banding together naturally had deficiencies; the most obvious among these was the lack of trust and understanding between them. None was confident to solo Gu Fei who had a top-grade weapon. This meant that they would have to rely on one another to deal with him. It was inevitable for them to think, I’m confident with my strength, but I’m not sure about these guys....

Everyone eyed one another with apprehension, collectively thinking, That one’s no good; his eyes clearly show his intention to rely on the others.

In an instant, everyone had the I-had-the-ability-but-the-others-did-not mentality. None of them was able to abandon this thinking

as they silently congratulated themselves for not being rash.

Slowly but surely, the crowd surrounding Gu Fei thinned. All arrogantly made their way here, yet they left quite meekly. In no time at all, Gu Fei was left standing there alone.

“How annoying!” Gu Fei exclaimed in disappointment. All it took to scare the enemies away was a few smug words and a sigh. Was he too domineering with his posturing?

“Don’t worry,” Xi Xiaotian consoled, saying, “You still have a chance to fight.”

“Are you talking about those guys over there?” Gu Fei glanced over to a corner of Peddlers’ Street.

“You’ve noticed them, too?” Xi Xiaotian asked in shock.

“I’ve spotted them long ago,” Gu Fei confirmed.

“Why are you feeling so down, then?” Xi Xiaotian asked.

“Those guys are already on the menu. I thought I could fight twice; now, it’ll just be once. That’s what’s saddening!” Gu Fei explained, utterly dissatisfied.

“Violent Fei!” Xi Xiaotian extoiled.

Gu Fei squatted down once more while asking, “Why’re they not coming over?”

“They won’t come over so easily,” Xi Xiaotian answered.

“Oh? Seems like you know them,” Gu Fei said.

“They’re part of a certain gang in Yunduan City... Whenever the players of that gang have their eyes on someone’s top-grade gear, they’ll find a chance to eliminate that player for him or her to drop the equipment. Seems like they’ve set their eyes on you,” Xi Xiaotian expounded.

“Is that so?” Gu Fei once again swept his gaze over to that corner. The group of men over there had already left without a trace. Only

a man with a stall was in that area, acting as if nothing out of the ordinary had just happened.

“They won’t strike so easily, but they won’t give up as well. They’ll stop at nothing till you drop that sword,” Xi Xiaotian warned.

Gu Fei knew the importance of keeping a low profile as well as not showing off one’s wealth. Right now, however, he felt fortunate for owning a top-grade weapon like Moonlit Nightfalls; it could seduce players with evil intentions to provoke him into a PvP. He could use this chance to vanquish evil and maintain world peace if there was a need for that... Overall, it meant that there would be a battle to be fought!

“They’re gone for now, probably leaving that guy behind to keep an eye on you. Once they find you alone in a secluded place, that’s when they’ll strike!” Xi Xiaotian said, “They’ll kill you today, tomorrow, and the day after. My point is that they’ll remember your identity and keep on killing you until they get that sword of yours.”

Gu Fei nodded his head and casually asked, “Are you part of their gang?”

“To hell with you! Stop treating me like I’m such a bad person!” Xi Xiaotian bristled, making Gu Fei feel dumbfounded.

Gu Fei’s expression was hard to read. Hesitating for a bit, he finally asked, “So why cover your face?”

“To sell things!” Xi Xiaotian said, stomping on the ground.

“Why must you cover your face when you sell things?” Gu Fei pressed on.

“You wanna know why I’m hiding my face?” Xi Xiaotian asked. She abruptly took off the veil she was wearing as she shouted, “Selling equipment! The price is cheap, so come take a look!”

Her crisp female voice compelled everyone to look over. Many

male players' eyes flashed. A man darted over, bent down to inspect the cheap items on Xi Xiaotian's mat, and eagerly remarked, "Not bad. I'll buy them all! Babe, give me your price!"

"10 gold coins," Xi Xiaotian dully said.

"No problem!" The guy quickly picked the mat with all the items on it off the ground and rolled it up into a bundle. Following this, he counted 10 gold coins and graciously handed the sum to her. Many of the nearby players displayed an envious look when they saw her accept the coins.

"Babe, I've bought everything you're selling. Since you're free now, why don't you have a couple of drinks with me?" The buyer remained standing there after lifting up the bundle.

"Go to hell and scram!" Xi Xiaotian viciously snapped back, short of spitting at the person's face.

Those watching were astounded by what they had just heard.

The items on Xi Xiaotian's stall were just average goods. Their total cost was indeed worth 10 gold coins. However, the items were of different professions. Logically speaking, none would purchase everything at once. Based on what was transpiring right now, it was clear that the buyer was not after the items.

The sum of 10 gold coins was already high for the average players. The gist was that the man had spent quite a significant sum just to strike up a conversation with Xi Xiaotian and to show off his wealth to others.

All gawked at his show of wealth, not expecting that he would provide them a more exciting scene to watch afterward. The lady before their eyes was truly vicious. Not wanting to date the man after selling her items was fair. However, she actually cursed him rather showily.

Only Gu Fei knew the reason for her behavior. Xi Xiaotian clearly vented all her pent-up frustration on this pitiful man. Had he

really wronged her this time around? Was she honestly trying to sell those trashy items? Gu Fei was at a loss.

Whatever the case might be, the buyer before them had definitely been angered. No matter how beautiful Xi Xiaotian was, no one could tolerate being shamed like that.

“F*ck!” The buyer wasted 10 gold coins, yet he was nearly spat at in return. He was turned into a laughingstock for those who were watching as well. Unable to restrain himself, he threw the bundle of equipment he had just bought at Xi Xiaotian. Following this, he pulled out from his dimensional pocket a huge axe that was bigger than Xiaoyu’s. The man straightened his spine, channeled energy throughout his body, and bent his legs. His right hand lowered the axe to his side, leveling it off the ground at a forty-five-degree angle.

Gu Fei, who had a vast amount of fighting experience, immediately recognized the man’s stance. Quickly lifting his sword forward with one hand, he used his other hand to hold Xi Xiaotian.

Cyclone came as he expected. This Warrior obviously had a lot of fighting experience as well. Experienced Warriors would always retain a certain amount of Rage to activate their skill whenever the need arose. Not only did Cyclone provide Warriors the highest damage output, it functioned as their life-saving skill as well. It was much more useful than the level 6 Warrior skill, Safeguard.

Blocking Cyclone was already a practiced move for Gu Fei. Even his flying-outward posture after taking advantage of the attack’s force was very smooth. But this time around, a slight mishap occurred when he took advantage of Cyclone’s force, causing him to fly outward rather sloppily.

The reason being his Strength was just too low. Gu Fei holding Xi Xiaotian while they flew outward was truly an impossible feat. Xi Xiaotian became a deadweight that prevented him from properly being hurtled outward by the Cyclone’s force.

Although Gu Fei managed to use Cyclone's force to propel them outward, they did not fly in the air; instead, the two tumbled on the ground from that attack like a pair of gophers, sending dust scattering everywhere.

Gu Fei was alright. At the very least, he was able to stand up. He had high Agility so he managed to catch his footing despite everything happening in a split second. Xi Xiaotian, meanwhile, was in a miserable state. Clueless of what was about to happen, she literally rolled to the ground when they were plunged outward by Cyclone. However, the even worse thing here was that she was still carrying the bundle of equipment that the Warrior had thrown her way. It clung to the hem of her thief cloak and made loud clanking noises as she rolled together with it to the ground.

Holding Xi Xiaotian, Gu Fei failed to completely grasp the direction of the incoming force. Thus, the force of the attack sent his back banging against a wall. Pain quickly blossomed from his back and he felt as if his bones had been shaken loose. He raised his head slightly, just in time to see Xi Xiaotian hurtling toward his direction like a guided missile; her head was about to make contact with a wall. He hurriedly pushed Xi Xiaotian to forcefully change her trajectory, resulting into her rolling quite a distance before finally stopping.

"I'm so sorry!" Gu Fei called out.

"Big bro, get off from there!" A voice came from beneath him.

Gu Fei lowered his head and immediately stepped to the side. His foot was actually stepping on someone! The guy was one of the many players lining the wall with their merchandise. The man tried to dodge when he saw Gu Fei hurtling toward his direction. However, his legs had become numb from sitting all day long, so he proceeded to crawl on the ground instead. This unfortunately resulted into him being stepped on by Gu Fei.

"Sorry! So sorry!" Gu Fei apologized profusely.

The man tumbled once. Facing the sky from where he was lying, he blurted out, “Don’t worry about it.”

Gu Fei looked toward Xi Xiaotian by the side. She slowly picked herself up from the ground, paused for a moment, and said, “Would’ve been better if I’d been killed!”

The onlookers were once more in an uproar. None of them had expected the two players to survive Cyclone. While they saw Gu Fei raising his sword to block the skill, none noticed how his sword had threaded through the shredding Cyclone. The two whizzed out after taking the blow of Cyclone. Even if they were not dead, they should be close to dying. Right now, however, the two seemed to be quite alright despite looking quite bedraggled.

The Warrior’s Cyclone ended at this point, yet he apparently had no intention of stopping as he swiftly strode toward Xi Xiaotian.

Gu Fei looked at her and asked, “I won’t incur PK points if I slice him up now, right?”

Xi Xiaotian perplexedly nodded her head. She was also clueless about what had happened with that Cyclone moments ago. All she knew was that Gu Fei had helped her evade the skill, allowing her HP bar to remain full.

Unlike the others who could not appraise Gu Fei’s job class, she knew very well that he was a Mage. Mage was the job class most advantageous against the Warrior job class, so soloing a Warrior was not a difficult task for Gu Fei. However, no matter how anyone put it, Mages should not be attempting to ‘slice’ Warriors with swords. This left Xi Xiaotian somewhat puzzled.

Gu Fei was about to head toward the Warrior when three men came out of nowhere and blocked the path between the Warrior and Xi Xiaotian. Gu Fei saw that the player who had asked Xi Xiaotian to appraise his item was among the three.

“Chill out, friend. This is probably just a misunderstanding,”

someone said.

“Go to hell! Scram!” The Warrior used Xi Xiaotian’s words from earlier. Lifting his huge axe and activating his Charge skill, he swiftly knocked the person who had spoken several steps backward.

The person was in a Dizzy state even after stabilizing his footing. The two beside him quickly stepped forward upon seeing that the Warrior could not be talked into seeing reason. The Warrior on the left lifted his sword single-handedly and activated his Charge. The Thief on the right wielded his dagger, intending to circle the target and inflict Backstab on him.

Charge struck the opposing Warrior, but since the skill’s ability to cause a Dizzy status effect did not have a 100% proc rate, the status effect did not get triggered. The person’s skill proficiency and the opponent’s level and equipment affected this interaction as well.

The opposing Warrior bravely ignored the other Warrior’s Charge. Turning around, he cleaved his axe toward the Thief who had crept behind him. The Warrior moved his feet to prevent his target from positioning himself behind him again, and the two proceeded to exchange blows with each other.

Those who came to Xi Xiaotian’s rescue were clearly subpar in term of fighting abilities. Despite having a two-versus-one advantage, they were still overwhelmed by the huge axe wielder. The opposing Warrior easily controlled the fight’s tempo and forced the two to back off.

Their weapons clashed and tangled, causing Gu Fei to shake his head in disappointment.

How is this fighting? This is clearly children playing! Using the tree root and bamboo pole as if they were godly weapons, the two weapons clashed with each other without striking the bodies of the wielders. The one whose weapon broke first would be the loser. Gu

Fei recalled when a neighbor kid had been inspired by the TV series, 'Condor Heroes', and began practicing Quanzhen Sword Style and Yunu Sword Style. It was similar to how the two people before him were fighting their opponent.

Gu Fei was rattled watching this. The two people clashing with the Warrior were even more rattled. Turning their heads at Xi Xiaotian, they shouted, "Sis Xiaotian, run away quickly!"

Xi Xiaotian hollered back, "I'm coming!" She was about to reach into her dimensional pocket for her weapon to assist her comrades when Gu Fei stopped her, "Let me go, instead!"

Xi Xiaotian glanced at him. Gu Fei was smiling as he said to her, "Seems like some people still like you." With that, he turned and shouted to the two subpar players, "You two get out of my way. I'll solo him!"

The two had probably been waiting for this moment for quite some time. Not caring who had shouted, they quickly retreated to the side. Gu Fei coughed awkwardly as he took a few steps forward and stood in front of the huge axe wielder.

The axe-wielding Warrior squared his stance. He had been slashing away spiritedly for quite a while now. Managing to beat up the three players before had boosted his self-confidence to an unknown level. His heart could not help but thump in anticipation upon seeing Gu Fei's sword, Moonlit Nightfalls, which was shrouded in black luster. The Warrior was able to bully those three players before largely because their levels were significantly lower than his own. Each was equipping common-grade equipment as well.

Suddenly, the Warrior noticed that the person he was about to fight owned a top-grade equipment. Calming himself down, he immediately used Appraisal on the person. And yet, he learned nothing. He tried gauging the opponent's ability using his eyes, yet he ended up becoming more perplexed about the latter.

The black robe, which was something he had not seen before, seemed to be a mage robe. However, the weapon he was holding was a sword. Those who would wield a sword were usually Warriors and sometimes Knights.

Weapons were the most obvious way to differentiate all the job classes. In the end, the Warrior surmised that Gu Fei was a fellow Warrior. He was about to confront Gu Fei when the latter suddenly put his sword inside his dimensional pocket and assumed a barehanded fighting stance.

Unarmed? Is he a Fighter? The Warrior became more and more confused. Fighters would usually wear sparring gloves to increase their Attack Power. And yet, Gu Fei was facing him without wearing gloves. I'll just take a move of his and make sense of everything! the Warrior thought to himself. He then started clashing with Gu Fei ferociously.

Gu Fei slightly stepped to the Warrior's side and raised his right hand, "Twin Incineration! Incinerate!"

A fire lit up and the Warrior was instantly enveloped by it. His heart was engulfed by fear, F*ck! He's actually a Mage!

Mages had a natural advantage over Warriors. This was a fact every player knew. The Warrior could bravely engage in a one-versus-three fight with his enemies before precisely because he had appraised that they were not Mages and had lower levels.

Ironically, this present opponent of his, whom he could not appraise, happened to be his Warrior job class' arch-nemesis. The Warrior's arrogance immediately dissipated by half.

Actually, Gu Fei kept his weapon out of consideration for the Warrior. The Warrior had definitely lost quite a bit of HP after engaging in a one-versus-three crude fight; Gu Fei was afraid that the Warrior would be instant-killed if he used either Moonlit Nightfalls or Sacred Flames of Baptism on him. For some reason, Gu Fei did not actually have the intention to kill this Warrior, even

though he would not gain PK point by killing him. He deduced that his bare fists and average magic damage would enable him to prolong his fight with the Warrior.

The Warrior saw his HP dip after he was hit with Twin Incineration. However, he quickly collected himself upon noticing that the damage dealt on him was not high. The large axe in his hand danced in the air as he began his own assault.

Mages having an advantage over Warriors was largely due to their higher Agility. This allowed them to distance themselves from Warriors and cast spells from afar that ignored the high physical defense of Warriors.

If the average Mages could do this, Gu Fei could of course do so as well with his full-Agility build. Gu Fei easily distanced himself from the target and threw out a fireball as if it was a flying dagger. Although the damage dealt by the spell was insignificant, it nevertheless chipped off a bit of the Warrior's HP.

The Warrior would not have a chance of winning at this rate if the fighting dragged on.

Gu Fei saw the Warrior's eyes glaze over. He immediately stopped his attacks and retreated a few steps, saying, "Bro, what happened before was really just a misunderstanding."

The Warrior did not curse off this time, opting to stand quietly and listen to Gu Fei's words. With strength came the right to speak; this phrase was very true in online games.

Xi Xiaotian also walked over at this moment, "Mhm, it's my fault. I've been in a bad mood these past few days and couldn't control my temper. I scolded people for no rhyme or reason. Sorry that I offended you." Xi Xiaotian gathered the equipment still sticking on her body and bundled all up once more. Taking out 10 gold coins, she handed everything to the Warrior, "These things are for you. Here's your money, too. Consider everything as my compensation."

The Warrior felt stunned as he took the coins back, “I’ll take the gold coins, but I don’t need those items.”

“Just take them!” Xi Xiaotian insisted as she tried to stuff the bundle into his hands. The Warrior did not know how to react. After telling him off minutes ago, she was now forcefully gifting him this bundle. This change was too huge.

“Forget it! Who cares about your worthless stuff?” Gu Fei remarked from behind them.

“Go to hell! This is your fault!” Xi Xiaotian turned around and tossed the bundle of equipment to Gu Fei instead.

Gu Fei felt awkward. He headed to the Warrior and shook his hands, feeling helpless as he said, “You see, when it comes to women, there’re these few days every month....”

The onlookers seemed to realize something with that remark as they stared at Xi Xiaotian. Gu Fei who was standing beside her had that naturally obtuse look plastered across his face.

A distance away, a man in a corner was stealthily sending a message out, “That person’s a Mage!”

Chapter 102 - A Large-scale Organization

The axe-wielding Warrior left with his 10 gold coins. The onlookers also gradually dispersed when they saw that the show was over. Currently, the three teenage wannabe heroes, who had tried saving the damsel in distress, were stoically being complimented by Xi Xiaotian for their efforts.

Standing by the side and watching all these, Gu Fei tried to slip away. However, Xi Xiaotian noticed his minute movement and hollered, “Stay there!”

“There’s nothing else to do, so I’m leaving. Chat on without me,” Gu Fei passed this as goodbye.

“There’s something!” Xi Xiaotian stated rather firmly.

“What else is there?” Gu Fei asked, beaming.

Xi Xiaotian looked at him without saying another word.

Gu Fei sighed, “Fine! Today’s my fault for slandering you. I’m sorry!” Deep down, Gu Fei was unwilling to apologize. Xi Xiaotian squatting at a corner of Peddlers’ Street to sell odds and ends was something he could not accept as for real; it was a pity that he had no evidence to prove her otherwise. Gu Fei remained suspicious largely because he intuitively knew that Xi Xiaotian’s passion for swindling was not inferior to his passion for kung fu.

Hearing Gu Fei apologize, Xi Xiaotian smiled triumphantly, “You didn’t slander me; I really do have an ulterior motive.”

D*mn! Knew it! Gu Fei howled in his mind. On the surface, his facial expression remained unchanged, “What’s your purpose, then?”

Xi Xiaotian did not speak but looked toward a certain direction. Gu Fei followed her gaze and saw that she was looking at a man. It was the guy from that group Gu Fei had expected to get his second battle from previously. The man was currently squatting by the

corner with a stall set up in front of him. From time to time, he would throw a glance over to them.

“What?” Gu Fei asked, puzzled.

Xi Xiaotian turned around and coaxed the three ‘wannabe heroes’ to leave, before pulling Gu Fei to squat by her stall, “That guy right there is part of that equipment-robbing gang that I’ve just told you. They’ve a few good items on them.”

“How long have you been eyeing them?” Gu Fei asked.

“Quite a while,” Xi Xiaotian admitted, adding, “I noticed their gang in my trips at the Trade Exchange and Auction House. They took note of those players who had bought top-grade equipment. Afterward, they attacked them. I thrice witnessed them PKing players possessing top-grade equipment.”

“That’s too much,” Gu Fei felt disgusted.

Xi Xiaotian nodded her head, “I feel that this gang isn’t just a random party. The members most likely belong to the same gaming workshop, or maybe they’re part of the same clan guild.”

Seeing Gu Fei’s look of confusion, Xi Xiaotian gave a more detailed explanation, “When we, the players, first entered Parallel World, we’re randomly assigned a city. The world map isn’t officially released yet; there ain’t teleportation portals for traveling between the in-game cities either. These workshops and clan guilds naturally can’t gather in one place. Thus, every city has some of their players, temporarily doing their own things. For now, they won’t unfurl their workshop or clan guild banners.”

“Gaming workshop? Clan guild?” Actually, Gu Fei was confused about those.

“Don’t you know what they are?” Xi Xiaotian asked.

Gu Fei laughed awkwardly, “I’ve heard of them. I just don’t know the particulars.”

“I’ll give you a quick rundown, then. Gaming workshops exist for the purpose of earning profits. So if those of a gaming workshop obtain the dropped equipment of the targeted players, they’ll sell them when the time is ripe. If it’s a clan guild doing the stealing, I’m afraid the goal will be strengthening the clan guild using the ill-gotten equipment. The pieces of top-grade equipment are probably used by them once they obtain them,” Xi Xiaotian explained.

“So which group do those guys belong?” Gu Fei asked.

“I’ve a feeling they belong to a clan guild. The purpose of workshops is to earn money; they care more about the gaming regulations and environment than anything else. Renowned workshops are organized and have strict rules, so they won’t do such lowly acts. Still, there’s a possibility of those guys belonging to a small workshop that does this sort of ‘killing the goose that lays the golden egg’ thing. But the scale of these small workshops is limited. In games like this where entering a city is entirely random, it’s quite difficult for them to gain a foothold in any city,” Xi Xiaotian elaborated.

“That makes sense,” Gu Fei nodded his head.

“I’ve reached out to the gang’s victims for more information; I was thinking of identifying the gang members through the stolen equipment. Yet, those stolen goods all vanished. They didn’t appear in the Auction House or any Trade Exchange platform. They’re not seen in any players’ hands in various grinding maps, too,” Xi Xiaotian said.

Gu Fei realized what she was doing, “So you came all the way to Peddlers’ Street, hoping to see if they’ll appear here?”

Xi Xiaotian nodded her head, “While the chance of them appearing here is slim, this is the only trail I can pick up.”

Gu Fei laughed, “You’ve forgotten another trail.”

“What?” Xi Xiaotian asked.

“Mailbox,” Gu Fei answered.

“OH!” Xi Xiaotian knocked her head lightly with her fist as she received this epiphany.

“If this gang really belongs to this sort of large-scale organization like you supposed, it’ll definitely have manpower in various in-game cities. This method of strengthening themselves must’ve been adopted in every city they’ve a presence. This gang’s members are probably cautious enough to not use the equipment in the city they’ve gotten it from. They must’ve used the mailbox to exchange equipment with their fellow clan mates across the game, which will explain why you no longer see the stolen equipment,” Gu Fei hypothesized.

“You’re right! That must be it,” Xi Xiaotian patted Gu Fei on the arm, “You ain’t half bad.”

Gu Fei chuckled. He did not actually possess a deep understanding of the game. It was only because he had written a letter back in Yueye City and learned about No Smile mailing Zephyr’s Whisper to Dusky Cloud a few days ago, so Gu Fei easily made the connection.

“It’ll be difficult to track them down if that’s really the case,” Xi Xiaotian sighed. It was really easy for players to hide their identities in Parallel World. No one would know the players’ IGNs unless they gave those themselves, faces could be covered with pieces of cloth, and equipment could be changed if players had a few sets – exactly what Gu Fei had done to hide his identity.

“Thus, you’re in need of a person with top-grade equipment to be the bait. This person will attract these men out of their hiding places for you to try and swindle them,” Gu Fei concluded, “Coincidentally, I appeared before you!”

“I’ve never thought of that before,” Xi Xiaotian denied

vehemently, feeling dumbfounded, “It’s useless to attract them that way! If you get looted by them and lose your equipment, you’ll still be left in the dark regarding their identity.”

“Just don’t die easily, then,” Gu Fei smiled.

Xi Xiaotian rolled her eyes, “Didn’t I explain it clearly? This gang steals players’ top-grade equipment every day! The gang members’ prowess doesn’t need further proving, right? They’re in possession of some top-grade equipment, too.”

“So why did you stop me for?” Gu Fei asked, puzzled.

Xi Xiaotian was puzzled as well, “It’s just to explain to you why I’m really squatting in this corner here.”

“That simple?” Gu Fei asked.

“It’s that simple,” Xi Xiaotian nodded her head.

Gu Fei was about to say something when the system notified him of a new message. Seeing that it was from Young Master Han, he immediately opened it up to have a look: “Sword Demon was killed.”

Gu Fei was startled and quickly asked, “When?”

“While he’s grinding. I just received a message from him,” Young Master Han said, “Ray’s Bar. Waiting for the rest of you.”

Gu Fei did not bother with Young Master Han; instead, he messaged Sword Demon, “Are you at a spawn point? Don’t go out yet!”

“What?” Sword Demon asked.

“Don’t go out of the spawn point,” Gu Fei repeated himself.

Sword Demon replied with one word, “Fine!”

Gu Fei stared at Xi Xiaotian, “Looks like one of my friends caught the eye of this gang, too.”

“What?”

“He got killed while grinding. Oh, yeah. You know him. Frost Memories, remember?” Gu Fei reminded her.

“Of course...” Xi Xiaotian replied daintily.

“That’s him. I’m heading over now,” Gu Fei got up.

“Wait! Don’t forget they’ve got eyes on you, too! That man over there from their group has been watching us from the start!” Xi Xiaotian reminded him as well.

“You’re right!” Gu Fei said as he quickly walked toward the man who had been watching him all this while.

“Hey!” Gu Fei shouted as he arrived right in front of the person.

The person lifted his head and was shocked upon seeing that it was Gu Fei. However, he quickly regained his composure as he smilingly asked, “Do you need me for something?”

Gu Fei smiled in return, “Robbery.”

“What?” The person felt stunned when Gu Fei pulled out Moonlit Nightfalls from his dimensional pocket. Gu Fei then plunged it straight toward the player. The person managed to quickly shift his body to the side to dodge the attack. Unfortunately for the guy, Gu Fei was even faster than him and had already changed his sword’s path to where the person was planning to move his body.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Gu Fei roared. A fire dragon sprang out of Moonlit Nightfalls, brushed through the person, and disappeared along with him. His parting gaze was one of disbelief.

Gu Fei did not wish to exchange blows with the man, so he casted a spell to insta-kill him. Gu Fei knelt down and carefully wrapped up the items the man had left behind in his stall.

The entire place descended into silence as he got up. All the players stared at Gu Fei with a horrified look on their faces. Quite a number of them hurriedly packed up their stalls in response to what they had just witnessed. Others took out their weapons,

exchanging eye contact with one another as they planned to take down the strong foe.

Gu Fei smiled at them all, “This is a personal vendetta. Everyone, just ignore me and carry on with your business.”

Gu Fei headed toward the street exit under the crowd’s gaze. Passing by Xi Xiaotian’s stall, he flicked something toward her with his finger and casually said, “This stuff here looks pretty good. It’s my gift to you!”

Xi Xiaotian caught it and inspected it. It was a crystal badge; the stats on it were garbage but it had a very pretty design. Xi Xiaotian pouted, “You robbers are the most annoying. There’s not even a bit of elegance or skill in your techniques.”

Gu Fei laughed as he quickly left Peddlers’ Street.

Silence reigned in the street. After Gu Fei left, everyone’s eyes fell on to Xi Xiaotian.

Chapter 103 - Appraisal Assistant

Gu Fei sprinted toward Ray's Bar after leaving Peddlers' Street.

This sort of emergency meeting reflected on every member's speed. Gu Fei arrived at Ray's Bar and found that Young Master Han and Royal God Call were already there. One was drinking at the bar counter, and another was at a nearby table, writing his mage secret manual.

Not too long after, Brother Assist arrived. War Without Wounds entered the bar next.

"Why is Sword Demon not here yet?" Young Master Han wrinkled his brows as he looked at the time.

"Oh... I told him not to leave the spawn point," Gu Fei said.

"Why?" everyone looked at Gu Fei.

"There's a gang that has premeditated this attack on him," Gu Fei explained, saying, "This gang specifically targets players with top-grade equipment and finds a chance to kill them repeatedly until that particular equipment drops. It's likely that Sword Demon is in this gang's crosshairs."

Brother Assist was shocked. He paused for a bit before saying with a sorrow-filled voice, "Miles, why you gotta do this? If you keep stealing my job and revealing all the information, what's the value of me being in this mercenary group?"

Gu Fei apologetically said, "Sorry. Go on. Say what you gotta say."

Brother Assist nodded his head, cleared his throat, and addressed everyone around him, "The general situation is as Miles said. Let's see if anyone has any information to add."

All rolled their eyes at him. Brother Assist felt slightly embarrassed, "If this gang was so easy to uncover, they would be

hunted long ago. They've gotten away with it many times already."

"Even the victims killed by them have no idea about their identity?" everyone asked disbelievingly.

Brother Assist nodded his head, "They mainly target Mages, Archers, and Thieves. Victims barely even locate them before they are killed."

Everyone was in deep thought. Young Master Han asked Gu Fei, "So you suspect they've a formation or trap set up in front of the spawn point and will continuously ambush Sword Demon?"

"That's right," Gu Fei confidently replied.

Young Master Han patted him on the arm, "Thieves have Stealth, thank you very much!" As Gu Fei was feeling embarrassed beyond redemption, Young Master Han sent Sword Demon a message. In a short while, Sword Demon arrived.

"You have our deepest condolences!" everyone sympathetically said.

Sword Demon was not that glum, "It's just one level; it's no big deal."

Everyone tactfully refrained from commenting. Sword Demon's death was not just losing a level. Since the experience points he had earned were about to let him ascend to level 31, his death had more like dropped him by two levels.

"It's fine. At least, you didn't drop Frost Memories," Gu Fei consoled him.

"It got dropped..." Sword Demon said emotionlessly.

Everyone felt stunned. The equipment drop rate in Parallel World was not high; Sword Demon was truly unlucky for losing his prized weapon in just one death.

"That's not good! They'll mail Frost Memories to another city;

you won't ever find it if that happens!" Gu Fei stood up and exclaimed.

"How do you know?" everyone asked, shocked.

"I don't have the time to explain; quickly head to the mailboxes!" Gu Fei said.

"They killed me for my Frost Memories?" Sword Demon still could not grasp the reason why he had been killed.

"There's a gang that specifically targets players with top-grade equipment. Then..." Brother Assist explained in length.

"Degenerates!" Sword Demon gritted his teeth. Being killed did not elicit such anger in Sword Demon. He could even keep his emotions in check after dropping his top-grade weapon, Frost Memories. However, once he learned why he had been killed, Sword Demon finally snapped and expressed his anger unrestrainedly.

"Less talk; more action!" Gu Fei urged everyone. While Sword Demon instantly revived in the city from the grinding map, they all spent a significant amount of time gathering and talking at Ray's Bar. If the equipment-robbing gang had left immediately to mail out Frost Memories right after acquiring it, they would have arrived at a mailbox by now. It was unclear if Gu Fei and company could still make it in time, but they must still try their best to recover the weapon.

"The east gate is the closest entrance if someone returns from Sword Demon's grinding map. But in order to avoid the revenge of their victim, it's highly likely that they'll use the other gates. Our manpower is lacking, though. We might not be a match for them if we split our forces to the four gates... We can only gamble our chances by going to two out of the four gates. Assist, Royal, and Wounds, head to the east gate! Sword Demon, Miles, and I'll go to the south gate. We'll discuss the rest later on the mercenary channel," Young Master Han got up after designating their

positions.

“Wait. I think Miles alone will do...” Royal God Call said.

Everyone was dumbfounded, yet it was an accurate observation. Young Master Han nodded his head in acknowledgement, “Miles will head to the north gate, then.”

“Will Sword Demon and you do?” Brother Assist asked apprehensively. Young Master Han was a Priest that had no combat power; Sword Demon was good, but he had just lost a level and no longer possessed Frost Memories. The strength of this pair got lowered significantly.

Young Master Han, however, thought differently, “I’m more worried about you three. Can you guys manage without a Priest?”

“F*ck! Worry about yourself! Sword Demon, if you can’t get Frost Memories back, it’s definitely his fault!” Royal God Call said indignantly.

Sword Demon acquiesced, “Fine.”

“Roll out!” They split into their three teams once they left Ray’s Bar.

The difference in each member’s speed was distinctly displayed once more. Royal God Call was the fastest in the three-man group, so he quickly arrived at the designated gate, leaving Brother Assist and War Without Wounds behind. Between Sword Demon and Young Master Han’s pair, the latter was the one slowly being left behind.

The south and east gates were relatively close to Ray’s Bar, so the distance between the fast and slow people in each team was not too significant. Given that time was of the essence, they did not bother to be too precise in their arrangement of which particular gate to head over.

Online gaming experts like them had long gotten used to conversing while running in Parallel World. As such, they were

presently conversing on the mercenary channel. Young Master Han opined, “It’s also possible that those equipment looters ain’t the culprits, but those seeking revenge on you. Even if we exclude your enemies from other MMOs and focus only on those in Parallel World... You’re the most conspicuous in that No Smile assassination matter! Frost Memories was just too eye-catching back then.”

“I know,” Sword Demon acknowledged.

“Also, that time when we were in Yueye City, you’re the one leading that army in the frontline. I’m afraid that those of Past Deeds got a clear look of your face,” Young Master Han added.

“The Past Deeds’ men won’t be able to quickly take their revenge on Sword Demon, since they’re still busy with matters on their end,” Brother Assist interjected.

“I know. I’m just saying...” Young Master Han acknowledged.

“What do those guys look like? Sword Demon, you’ve yet to tell us,” Brother Assist said.

“A Mage, a Thief, and an Archer suddenly attacked me. I got insta-killed, so I didn’t manage to take a good look at them. But I did manage to activate my Appraisal skill right before I died. It landed on the Thief ambushing me. He’s wearing Storm Cloak that adds 12 points to Agility and boosts attack speed by 5%; Shadow Boots that boost movement speed by 14%; Windbreaker Hat; Double Loop Belt; Wolf’s Ring that adds 4 points to Strength and Agility; Candle Emblem that buffs HP by 2%; Ring of Strength that adds 2 points to its eponym stat; and lastly, Necklace of Speed that adds 2 points to Agility. His weapon is called Dual Serrated Daggers that applies the Bleed effect,” Sword Demon reported everything in one-go.

In Parallel World, as long as the pieces of equipment shared a name, their basic attributes, such as Defense and Attack Power would be the same. The difference in them only lay in the

additional traits or the kind of stats they would be boosting. Knowing the additional traits attached to the equipment was, therefore, a key factor in identifying a target.

After Sword Demon reported everything, Young Master Han summarized the key points, “Take note of a three-man team consisting a Mage, a Thief, and an Archer. Take note of a Thief with that equipment description, too!”

Everyone gave their confirmation besides Gu Fei. He stopped running and helplessly said, “I don’t have Appraisal; what do I do?!”

There was no time, so everyone only broached this matter now. Fighting the opponents alone was not a problem for Gu Fei, but identifying them through the Appraisal skill was a tough nut for him to crack.

Having Appraisal skill was not enough to do this task; the skill’s rank must be high as well. Using the Appraisal skill to identify players was very troublesome in Parallel World for a number of reasons. First, it would only succeed against players with lower level than the skill user. Second, the skill user would have to ensure that his or her Appraisal skill was higher than the targeted players. Third, successfully appraising the targeted players was not 100% guaranteed. Its success hinged on the probability rate, which was similar to the chances of players hitting their targets in other MMOs. Fourth and last, even if Appraisal was successful, it did not mean that everything about the target would be revealed. Out of the nine equipment slots, the skill user could usually only view four or five of them. It was common for the rest of the items to remain obscure with question marks displayed on their description windows.

Whatever the case might be, this trip was a waste for Gu Fei who had not learned the Appraisal skill.

Brother Assist had the highest level of Appraisal skill among the

members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group; second was Sword Demon; meanwhile, Young Master Han, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds shared the third spot. With the mindset that a professional should not have such a glaring weakness, they had all made sure to train their Appraisal skill.

Assisting Gu Fei in identifying the targets was beyond these five's capabilities, however. Sword Demon and Young Master Han were already the minimum limit; the other three-man team was tight on manpower as well. After all, they had no Priest to bestow Heal on them. Fighting against the opposing team with such a balanced job class composition was already a tall task.

"Let's ignore him. Miles will just find some babes along the road to help him appraise the target," Royal God Call left Gu Fei to his own devices.

The others thought Royal God Call was joking as they pondered on the matter. Unexpectedly, Gu Fei jolted with that one sentence and said to them, "Yeah, I'll do that." Everyone was shocked. Could he really casually grab a lady off the street to help him?

Gu Fei obviously did not have such intention. However, when Royal God Call mentioned "babes", it reminded Gu Fei that he was not asking for help with the fight but just with appraising the opponents. The ladies of Amethyst Rebirth were surely capable of doing the job.

Making up his mind, he quickly pulled out the guild channel. He then saw rows upon rows of words being exchanged in rapid succession on the conversation window. Ladies were creatures that enjoyed chatting and gossiping. In fact, they were much more diligent with this matter than leveling. With him being the only man in the guild, the conversation window would obviously be dominated by the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies. Hence, Gu Fei had never partaken in any talks on the guild channel before. By the time the messages stopped flashing on the conversation window, Gu Fei had already arrived at the north gate. Those were just the

messages that Gu Fei missed today since he had gotten online. If it's everything since the beginning of this game... Gu Fei shivered at the thought. He did not know how to start a conversation with these women; after thinking for a while, he asked, "Is there anyone here?!"

"F*ck you, d*mb*ss! Can't you see the many sisters about? Why're you asking if there's anyone around?!" someone shouted. Gu Fei looked at the IGN: Lie Lie.

"Anyone among you has high Appraisal skill? I need help..." Gu Fei asked, not bothering to answer Lie Lie's sarcastic question.

Everyone did not report their Appraisal skill. Brimming with curiosity, they each asked what the matter was instead.

"It's urgent! I'll explain later!" Gu Fei answered.

"My Appraisal skill is at rank 8," a lady softly said.

Gu Fei did not know what rank 8 Appraisal skill meant; he glanced at the lady's IGN: Ice Glaze.

"How fast can you get to the city's north gate?" Gu Fei asked.

"Oh, I'm near there. I'll head over right away," Ice Glaze replied.

Gu Fei added her as a friend, "Thanks a lot!"

"You're welcome," Ice Glaze replied.

Chapter 104 - Ice Glaze the Mage

Although Gu Fei had seen all the Amethyst Rebirth Guild's ladies, he could still not match their faces to their IGNs besides a handful of them. Hence, he was unsure which one was Ice Glaze among the ladies. At this moment, he arrived at the north gate and saw no one near the mailbox. Gu Fei promptly took a spot to stake out the mailbox's vicinity. Looking around, he did not see a familiar face from Amethyst Rebirth.

At this instant, Will-low sent him a private message asking if she could help him with anything.

"It's okay now. Someone's on the way to assist me with my need. I don't have the Appraisal skill, so I was looking for an assistant," Gu Fei informed her.

"Oh. My Appraisal skill used to be pretty strong before, but its rank dropped when my levels got reduced," Will-low said dejectedly. Technically, the penalty for dying would only reduce the player's level and hold the possibility of dropping his or her equipment. However, the causal relationship of skill and level meant that losing a level would corollary reduce a skill's rank. For example, a player's character had to reach level 30 first for his or her Appraisal skill to get to rank 10. If that player dropped a level, his or her Appraisal skill would drop down to the next highest rank possible for his or her level 29 character.

Putting the skill's rank aside, what Gu Fei needed right now was someone who could appraise his target, which meant he had a strict criterion for his helper: The player's Appraisal skill must be higher or equal to the target. If that were not the case, he would ask for Will-low's help already – with him being on closer terms to her than the other ladies – instead of asking for help on the guild channel.

When Gu Fei first entered Amethyst Rebirth, the guild's ladies

had lower levels except for Xiaoyu who had already reached level 30. A few days had passed since then; Gu Fei was unsure if it was No Smile's incident that had incited them, but when Gu Fei looked through the guild members list anew, quite a few of them were at level 30. This included Ice Glaze.

"I'm near the mailbox," Gu Fei sent Ice Glaze a message.

"I see you," Ice Glaze replied.

Gu Fei looked around him once again and saw a familiar-looking lady walking down the paved road toward him.

"Hi!" Ice Glaze greeted Gu Fei when she was close enough. This was the first time that they had properly exchanged greetings with each other.

"What is it that you need me to appraise?" Ice Glaze took the initiative to ask Gu Fei.

"It's like this..." Gu Fei kept an eye on the city's entrance as he gave her a briefing of the matter at hand. "I just need you to find that person. Leave the rest to me," Gu Fei passed the relevant information Sword Demon had given him to Ice Glaze.

"So that's how it is. Hope I can be of help!" Ice Glaze said. Level 30 players could raise their Appraisal skill to rank 10. Hence, she was somewhat apprehensive if her rank 8 Appraisal skill could help Gu Fei in identifying his target.

"Sorry to trouble you," Gu Fei said.

"No need to be formal with me. We're in the same guild, after all!" Ice Glaze giggled. Since she specially came here to assist him, Gu Fei believed her words to be sincere and not out of courtesy. He felt slightly touched by this fact.

"You're a Mage, too!" Gu Fei said after checking Ice Glaze's character window.

"Mhm-mhm. Same as you," Ice Glaze nodded her head.

“May I look at your weapon?” Gu Fei asked.

“Oh...” Ice Glaze handed over her magic stave to Gu Fei without a second thought.

The trust being shown right now was something the newbie Gu Fei would not understand. Equipment in online games was much more valuable than life itself. Gu Fei asking Ice Glaze to hand over her equipment was akin to people in reality saying, “May I borrow your life for a bit?” Someone who knew the decorum in online games would never make such a request no matter how close they were. Gu Fei was magnanimous at heart, yet he did not give his request much thought despite understanding the meaning of those words. He only wanted to gauge how much stronger Moonlit Nightfalls was in comparison to a level 30 Mage’s magic staff. Reflexively asking to borrow the equipment, he easily got it in his hands. He inspected the item briefly and handed it back just as quickly.

Ice Glaze’s magic staff was a white-tier weapon with average stats. Gu Fei thoughtlessly pulled out the staff July had previously given him and passed it over to her, “Yours isn’t as good as this one, right?”

Ice Glaze received it and took a look before nodding her head, “Yeah. It’s tons better than mine.”

“You should take and use it, then!” Gu Fei offered casually.

Players becoming fond of new equipment and getting tired of their old ones happened every day in online games. Ice Glaze was no exception. She did not stand on ceremony and promptly nodded her head, saying, “I’ll borrow this, then.” She really did not seem to consider Gu Fei as an outsider.

Gu Fei continued to lock his eyes on the city gate before him. Ice Glaze followed suit, appraising the players that passed by. A while later, a team of six men appeared on the road leading toward into city. Judging from their equipment, they were a group of one

Thief, two Mages, two Archers, and one Priest. They matched the job class composition Sword Demon had described to them.

Gu Fei's eyes shone as he quickly pointed them out to Ice Glaze. She also noticed these men. Nodding her head in acknowledgement, she waited for the six to step into her Appraisal skill's range.

The six crossed the city's archway entrance. Their eyes automatically fell on the mailbox and made a beeline for it. Gu Fei felt as if the answer was very obvious by now. As expected, Ice Glaze quickly appraised each and faced Gu Fei, nodding her head; the Appraisal result matched the information given to her.

The six arrived at where Gu Fei and Ice Glaze were standing just as he sent a message through the mercenary channel, "Targets appeared!"

"Bro, are you sending something? Please make way if you're not," the Thief addressed Gu Fei courteously. Players would need to touch the mailbox to mail things; Gu Fei was currently blocking the mailbox. Upon hearing the Thief's request, he stepped aside quickly.

The man flashed Gu Fei a friendly smile. Gu Fei matched his friendly attitude as he stood beside the mailbox, asking, "Bro, how should I address you?"

"Nightmare of Death." The person smiled at Gu Fei as he activated the mailbox.

"Good name!" Gu Fei smilingly complimented. Suddenly, he lifted his leg sideways to score a high kick right at Nightmare of Death's shoulder.

Gu Fei was assailed with gloom. His Strength was just too weak! This was a weakness he had had ever since he first entered the game. Whenever an event made this weakness apparent, he would somewhat lose his concentration as the realization hit him hard.

Nightmare of Death merely took a few steps back after taking such a high side kick. If this were in reality, a kick from me to someone of his stature would send him flying for five meters, Gu Fei thought dejectedly while feeling a slight sense of déjà vu.

Unbeknown to Gu Fei, his unsatisfactory kick had actually caused Nightmare of Death and his companions to be in a daze. Although the hostility behind that kick was palpable, the damage it had caused was 'friendly'. Nowadays, some players who did not have high Attack Power would indeed engage in such horseplay with their friends oftentimes. Since Parallel World was but a game, falling down would not cause much injury to a player's body. Right now, the problem was that Nightmare of Death was not buddy-buddy with Gu Fei. Naturally, they were not friendly enough for one to roughhouse the other.

Nightmare of Death felt confused as he hesitantly regarded Gu Fei. Meanwhile, Gu Fei already recollected himself and sent another kick his way. Nightmare of Death saw the attack clearly this time and tried to dodge it. However, he found himself unable to do so, and the kick from Gu Fei connected with his skull. While the damage dealt by the attack was still insignificant, a foot imprint could clearly be seen on his face, looking somewhat unsightly. Nightmare of Death touched the huge footprint on his face, still at a loss regarding what was happening.

His five friends finally reacted. The Priest bestowed Heal on to Nightmare of Death, the Mages casted Fireball, and the Archers went through the process of shooting an arrow.

As two balls of fire zoomed toward Gu Fei, he bounced about the PvP field to dodge them. While wearing off Fireball's tracking effect, he was swiftly increasing his distance from the two Archers. The arrows the Archers would release were faster than these balls of fire. If Gu Fei wanted to evade them, he would need to buffer them a little.

The twang of bows resounded as arrows shot out from the two

Archers at this moment. Gu Fei clearly saw this and nimbly bent himself, easily evading the arrows and balls of fire altogether.

Everyone was dumbfounded at what they had just witnessed. Just how precise was this person's calculation and skill? From their perspective, Gu Fei appeared to have calculated the chronological order of the fire balls and arrows' arrival.

In actual fact, which pair of the attacks came first or last did not matter as they would head to the general direction of Gu Fei. He only had to leave his original position and the arrows would be easy to avoid while waiting for the Fireball's tracking effect to wear off. It was not through Gu Fei's superb control but instead the heavens' kindness that the arrows had arrived together with the balls of fire. Therefore, they should bemoan their flawless coordination that had unknowingly created such a favorable scenario for Gu Fei.

Gu Fei began his counterattack after dodging their assault. He had not initiated the attack at the start due to one reason: He had enough of being oppressed by PK value. Thus, he manipulated the opponents into attacking him first. This allowed Gu Fei to take advantage of the PvP rule that let him kill without acquiring PK value.

He darted toward the men. The two Archers were just about to nock their second arrows and the Mages were about to chant spells for their second Fireball when Gu Fei swung his sword in a circular motion toward them. This caused the Archers' arrow nocking to go awry and the Mages' chanting to be interrupted midway, with the balls of fire extinguishing just as quickly as they were ignited.

Once a Mage's ball of fire formed, it would not stay afloat and wait for the spell-caster to shout, "Shoot!" The spell-casting process required a Mage to complete the incantation. If the Mage suffered an attack during this process, the spell would immediately be disrupted.

At this moment, the air above the heads of Gu Fei and this group of men that had clustered together began to change color. The two Mages and Gu Fei's expressions changed when they heard the sound coming from above their heads. Upon lifting their heads up, they indeed saw that a flame wheel had begun to take shape mid-air. Gu Fei felt stunned. He quickly looked backward and spotted Ice Glaze by the side with her magic staff raised high up.

“DON'T MAKE IT DESCEND!” Gu Fei yelled at the top of his lungs as the fiery glow in the sky flashed. The flame wheel solidified and was about to land forcefully onto the ground.

“AH!” Ice Glaze's face turned ashen as she screamed as well.

Gu Fei had not expected her to aid him; Ice Glaze had also not expected the Mage Gu Fei to close in on his targets after distancing himself from them previously. She had prepared this flame wheel for these men beforehand. “Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!” Afraid that her assistance would come too late, she had said these five words in one go. Why would she hold the spell's last command, anyway? But outside her expectation, Gu Fei had darted toward its area of effect. Right now, she could only watch Gu Fei and those men attempt to survive the searing flame wheel that was upon them.

Chapter 105 - Battle beside the Mailbox

Evading the flame wheel was no longer possible for Gu Fei and the five men with its fast descending speed and proximity to them. It might still be possible for players to evade the Descending Wheel of Flames spell if they had begun to make their getaway while a Mage was still chanting its incantation, but in the case of Gu Fei and the others, no amount of Agility would help them escape the flame wheel now, since they only tried dodging the spell when it had already formed. At this moment, only the inexperienced player, Gu Fei, was still hoping that the flame wheel would not descend.

In the end, the flame wheel completed its descent and engulfed everyone within its AOE. This was the second time Gu Fei had been hit with such a devastating attack after bearing the brunt of Xiaoyu's Cyclone back then. Right now, this flame wheel scorched him as well as depleted his HP. Why is it my friends who always end up hurting me? Gu Fei was depressed.

Ice Glaze did not possess high Magic Attack Power like Gu Fei, after all; an AOE spell like Descending Wheel of Flames affected a large area, so the corresponding damage it could deal to each individual was rather low. Unless there was a large level difference, insta-killing using this spell was almost impossible.

Gu Fei's ability to insta-kill players with his Descending Wheel of Flames had unknowingly created a shadow in his heart. So when Ice Glaze casted the spell, Gu Fei's nerves were severely frayed, causing him to utter a heartfelt prayer for a Priest's timely intervention. No such thing happened, of course; instead, Gu Fei discovered that the damage dealt by Ice Glaze's Descending Wheel of Flames was rather low, only managing to chip a bit of his HP.

The five opponents Gu Fei was facing were clearly more experienced in fights involving spells; they remained unfazed while being blasted by the spell and even launched attacks on Gu

Fei to take advantage of his reduced HP. With their side having numerical superiority in this five-versus-one PvP, they were not afraid of confronting Gu Fei.

Gu Fei also awakened from his stupor. He quickly swung his sword upon seeing that the opposing Mages were about to cast spells once more.

The two Mages tried to cast Twin Incineration despite its damage output being low. Gu Fei had just received damage from a flame wheel; receiving the spell from them might not insta-kill Gu Fei, but its five-second duration of burning effect would be more than capable of doing so....

Unfortunately for the two Mages, Gu Fei's reaction was faster than theirs. Just as they were enunciating the second syllable of Twin Incineration, Gu Fei's Moonlit Nightfalls swooped down and insta-killed them. Killing the two Mages by hitting them with Ice Glaze's Descending Wheel of Flames once and Gu Fei's Moonlit Nightfalls twice was not surprising, as the opposing pair had low HP.

As for the Priest in their midst, he was still healing himself and did not realize that his teammates had stepped through the threshold of life and death.

It was now the two Archers' turn to panic, as Gu Fei engaged them in melee next. The two Archers had originally assumed that their two Mage friends would be able to kill off Gu Fei, but the two Mages were the ones killed off by him in the end. Being weak in melee, the two Archers performed in the fight more poorly than the Mages. They tried to distance themselves from Gu Fei, yet the latter did not let them do so as he stabbed them twice.

Gu Fei was a full-Agility Mage, so the Archers could not pull away no matter how fast they retreated. Actually, he was inferior to the two's running speed. But by simply extending his arm holding a sword forward, he was able to make up for this deficit. The

Archers were eventually pierced each in their backs. Just like the two Mages before them, one flame wheel and two stabs turned them into streams of white light.

After killing the four, Gu Fei finally faced the petrified Priest who had raised his magic staff. The Priest, who had just finished healing himself, turned to help his companions next. What greeted his sight, however, was their disappearing figures as Gu Fei killed them one by one almost instantly.

The Priest was now alone and helpless, yet Gu Fei felt not an ounce of sympathy for him. Gu Fei resolutely darted forward... The Priest was obviously slower than Gu Fei, and these few meters showed this fact clearly. The escaping Priest just turned his body halfway around when Gu Fei caught up to him.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Gu Fei happily called out, thinking of how the two Mages from before must have felt vexed at having only chanted half of this spell’s incantation.

The Priest obviously had an Endurance build, as he survived Gu Fei’s Twin Incineration. This was hardly unexpected for various reasons. Firstly, Twin Incineration dealt the lowest damage out of all the spells available for Mages. Secondly, the weapons wielded by players could not influence the damage output of the spell’s five-second burning effect. Thirdly and ultimately, the Priest could heal himself, so weathering the spell was easy!

Fortunately, Gu Fei was not careless and delivered another Twin Incineration to the Priest. With the Priest finally succumbing to this blow, Moonlit Nightfalls was able to regain its reputation as a weapon with monstrous Spell Damage.

All this happened within a short timeframe. When the fiery glow of Ice Glaze’s Descending Wheel of Flames dissipated, only Gu Fei was left of the six people that had originally been engulfed by the blazing flame wheel.

“So powerful!” Gu Fei flashed a thumbs-up toward Ice Glaze,

“You insta-killed them all.”

Ice Glaze was no Xiaoyu, however. Understanding everything, she smilingly said, “My PK value didn’t increase!”

Her words reminded Gu Fei of his PK value and he hurriedly checked his character window. His PK value had the number ‘6’ written in red by its side.

“F*ck!” Gu Fei cursed aloud in his extreme vexation. The six men clearly initiated the attack! Only the Priest had not attacked him, so he was sure that his PK value would rise by 1 point at most. How did 1 PK point turn into 6 PK points?

Crap! Gu Fei realized what went wrong. His kill of that person by Peddlers’ Street had already awarded him 1 PK point, so the PvP rule of not gaining PK points when defending against assailants or killing players with PK value would not be applicable to him. This was because he had become a player with PK value before them.

Tears streamed down Gu Fei’s face. Even the wisest man would occasionally make mistakes. In addition, he was usually unmindful of the game rules. Seems like I’ve to adjust my mindset regarding PvP. I need to commit the PvP rules in my head to a point where I’ll know the consequence of my every move. PK value... was the game feature Gu Fei had the most contact with ever since he first entered Parallel World. He had rid himself of it about four hours ago and now it found its way back to him once more.

Ice Glaze naturally knew nothing of the emotional roller-coaster Gu Fei was going through in these few moments, as she regretfully said, “That guy seems to have fled using Stealth.” She was talking about Nightmare of Death, whom they managed to identify by the equipment information Gu Fei had provided her before. Could this count as Gu Fei miscalculating now that the target had escaped?

However, Gu Fei just smiled calmly, “Isn’t he still here?” With that, he leaped and twisted his body mid-air to deliver a beautiful roundhouse kick.

A figure appeared beside Gu Fei following this kick. It was Nightmare of Death whose head had turned askew as another big footprint became visible on his right cheek.

“How cool!” Ice Glaze applauded.

Gu Fei laughed, not thinking much of Ice Glaze’s compliment. People from the outside and the people in the know often focused on different things. While a roundhouse kick looked cool and beautiful, it was actually a move with limited application in real combat. This was because a certain distance and space was required to execute it. Making a turn mid-air with the body’s lower half and recovering from that position were major flaws of this move. Therefore, real experts would seldom use this move in bouts between one another.

Gu Fei used it this time for several reasons. First, the person he was fighting was not a kung fu practitioner like himself. Second, Nightmare of Death’s current standing position was just too perfect for a roundhouse kick; Gu Fei could not resist but employ this rarely used technique. Third, his roundhouse kick was something he had improved based on his research, reducing the kicking timeframe by half compared to the usual roundhouse kick. In layman’s terms, he had reduced its flaws by removing the redundant parts of the move!

Ice Glaze who lacked knowledge in kung fu would of course be unaware of all these; when Gu Fei heard her praise, he knew that it held neither substance nor meaning.

Meanwhile, Nightmare of Death tasted Gu Fei’s kicks for the third time, with his head receiving two out of the three. While the damage was inconsequential, he was clearly kicked stupid by Gu Fei. Five seconds had passed, yet he was still in that same pose. With his head skewed to the side of his body, it was as if he was stuck in a freeze frame shot of a film.

Gu Fei was actually glad Nightmare of Death had been standing

dumbly there, as he was currently buying time for his mercenary group mates.

Gu Fei had purposely blocked the mailbox earlier to confirm the one holding on to Frost Memories. After confirming that Nightmare of Death was the one holding the weapon, Gu Fei proactively killed of the rest of his companions. He purposely ignored Nightmare of Death to buy time for the rest of Young Master's Elite mercenary group's to arrive.

The extremely unluckily Sword Demon experienced an item-drop with merely one death today, losing his Frost Memories to Nightmare of Death. A hunt would be necessary if they wished to get Nightmare of Death to drop Frost Memories. Players with pieces of top-grade equipment would of course carry those around with them. Nightmare of Death was no different. The difficulty in reclaiming the weapon also increased since Frost Memories could change hands to a different owner at any given time.

In truth, Gu Fei had little hope of recovering Frost Memories. His main purpose was actually to help Sword Demon get even – well, besides his desire to fight.

Whatever the case might be, Frost Memories remained as an important goal at the moment. Nightmare of Death would naturally respawn at the Thieves' Union after being killed off. Gu Fei was currently waiting for Young Master Han and the rest to position themselves there before sending this opponent over.

Nightmare of Death stood frozen in place for five seconds before coming back to his senses. Although his hand was holding on to a dagger, Nightmare of Death did not know what to do with it. Running away was the best plan. Just as Nightmare of Death decided on this, Gu Fei's sword whizzed over.

If Nightmare of Death had tried to run away from the beginning, Gu Fei would not have been able to stop him. This was because once he activated the level 30 Fleetfoot skill, Gu Fei would not be

able to catch up to him. Seeing Nightmare of Death come to his senses, Gu Fei immediately acted. He had to hamper this man until Young Master Han and company completed their preparations.

He flourished Moonlit Nightfalls into a flurry of crosses, forming a sword net. Nightmare of Death was trapped within it, at a loss of what to do. Fortunately, he was able to successfully duck and block some of Gu Fei's blows.

Unbeknown to him, this was intentionally done by Gu Fei. Being stuck in a stalemate, Gu Fei put up the facade of feeling anxious for his failed strikes to properly fool Nightmare of Death. And just like this, the opponent slowly regained his self-confidence. Although this opponent has the upper hand, I'm still able to defend against his attacks. Seems like my reaction time and speed ain't too bad! Nightmare of Death smugly thought to himself.

My backup should be arriving soon, so I'll just keep at it! Both were actually thinking the same thing. And yet, the two's wish was not granted in the end.

Gu Fei suddenly heard a high-pitched female voice shouting: "Oh! There's a fight!" followed by a shocked voice coming from Ice Glaze, "Lie Lie!"

"Hah. I've nothing to do, so I came to have a look. Turns out it's a fight! Let me give you a hand!" Lie Lie thundered.

Nightmare of Death and Gu Fei felt a chill in their hearts.

Chapter 106 - One after Another

Lie Lie's arrival was just too 'timely'! Never did Gu Fei expect that her level of nosiness would be this high. If he had known that asking publicly on Amethyst Rebirth's guild channel for help would result into this, he would have been more discreet in his approach.

Only Lie Lie was present at this moment, yet there was no telling if a second or third lady would come to 'join in on the fun' as well. Gu Fei's heart chilled when he recalled the rows upon rows of messages that he had seen on the Amethyst Rebirth's guild channel.

Looking backward, he saw Lie Lie gazing at the opponent and his direction with a yearning-to-fight expression on her face. It was similar to the look on the faces of those players in Yueye City... To think that there was also a PvP fanatic in Yunduan City!

I definitely can't let her join in! Gu Fei resolved in his mind. When he saw Lie Lie rushing over with that exact intention written all over her face, he quickly hollered, "Don't join in! I want a one-on-one fight with him!"

"Oh?" Lie Lie immediately stopped upon hearing his request. It seemed like she was a PvP fanatic who still knew how to respect the solemnity of two people having a duel. Since she could not participate in the fight upon Gu Fei's request, Lie Lie designated herself as a spectator instead and stood beside Ice Glaze calmly.

"How long has he been fighting?" Lie Lie asked Ice Glaze.

"About five minutes now!" Ice Glaze replied. Gu Fei had been 'play-fighting' for about five minutes already.

"Five minutes and the fight still can't be concluded?" Lie Lie was dumbfounded. The PvP in online games was unlike the martial arts experts' confrontation depicted in wuxia novels, where people

could exchange three to five hundred blows without determining a victor. In online games, a victory was often decided in just a few moves. Therefore, it was uncommon for a fight to last for five minutes or more.

Lie Lie felt weird about the fight's long duration, but she had gained some understanding after observing the fight a bit longer. The Mage Gu Fei had chosen to engage his opponent in a melee combat, even when Mages were known to not fare well in close-range fights. It even appeared that he was holding the upper hand in the fight, with how he was able to meet the opposing Thief's every blade strike with his own sword strike. It could be said that his combat prowess was not bad based on the two's exchanges alone. At the very least, he had not fallen to the opponent's blade! All in all, it was quite acceptable for this scuffle to extend beyond five minutes since Gu Fei was matching his job class disadvantage to the opponent's job class advantage.

"Why is he engaging that guy in melee?" Lie Lie asked Ice Glaze, thinking of a fact she was not privy of that would explain the current situation.

"Uhh... Maybe that top-grade sword of his has amazing melee features?" Ice Glaze shared her thoughts about the business at hand. Moonlit Nightfalls looked impressive no matter which angle one looked at it, after all.

Could he be that Close Combat Mage? was a question that popped into Lie Lie's head. However, she very quickly dismissed the thought of the formidable Close Combat Mage and PK King 27149 being Gu Fei. Why would such a great man not settle this Thief in five minutes? What am I even thinking? To even consider Miles as my idol just because he's a Mage engaging in melee is blasphemy! Plenty of Mages began to imitate the Close Combat Mage's fighting style ever since he became famous on the game forums. A Mage engaging in melee no longer proved anything, so Lie Lie rejected her correct guess and continued watching the skirmish.

Gu Fei's sword control and acting skills were truly praiseworthy, as they firmly convinced foes and friends alike that his struggle in the current fight was for real.

In fact, Lie Lie, who had always prided herself as a person with some knowledge in kung fu, could not tell that a real kung fu practitioner was fighting before her eyes. She even went as far as commenting on Gu Fei's every 'unsatisfactory' strike: "Eh?! Why're you slanting your sword again?!", "Ahhhh! Your attack's blocked, can't you move a little faster?", and so on... Visibly restraining herself, she stayed quiet... but only for two minutes. In the end, she could not hold herself back and began shouting once more, "Hey! You sure you can do this?! If you ain't, let this big sis here show you how fighting should be done!"

"Lie Lie, keep it down," coaxed Ice Glaze beside her.

"He's hopeless!" Lie Lie moaned in exasperation.

Ice Glaze did not comment on this. She had been watching the skirmish on the sidelines from the very start. Although she could not tell for sure that Gu Fei was deliberately going easy on his current opponent, he was undeniably responsible for eliminating the two Mages, two Archers, and one Priest earlier. Gu Fei killing those five at once was not an easy task, even if her Descending Wheel of Flames had lowered their HP. Furthermore, the three kicks Gu Fei had planted on Nightmare of Death's face were still etched deeply in her mind. If he's able to land kicks thrice on the opponent's face, how come he's suddenly unable to strike correctly at his enemy with a sword right now? Ice Glaze was truly an intuitive lady as she was able to notice the minute details of the current situation.

One lady was trying to deduce Gu Fei's intention, while another lady was busy shouting and disrupting his train of thoughts. Thankfully, neither of the ladies accidentally spoiled his plan.

Speaking of plan, Young Master Han and the rest seemed to be

taking a much longer time than Gu Fei had expected.

Gu Fei was starting to lose his patience, especially when he saw figures flash by the city entrance. With the Archer Range in Yunduan City being relatively close to the north gate and the inherently high Agility of the Archer job class... the two Archer friends of Nightmare of Death that Gu Fei had killed off earlier had actually made their way back here before Young Master Han and the rest finished their preparations!

“Don’t worry about me! You guys eliminate the ladies over there; they’re all from the same group!” Nightmare of Death shouted. He was once again thankful that Gu Fei had insisted on fighting him one-on-one to the two ladies earlier; not only did it stop the two women from joining in, it also gave his comrades ample time to return here.

The two Archers had actually been in a daze while making their way over here. This was because the two viewed Gu Fei as a formidable foe. Not receiving a reply from Nightmare of Death to their messages, they assumed that he had been killed off as well. The two then hesitantly decided to head over at the north gate to make sure of everything. Strangely, they did not receive any report of Nightmare of Death respawning at the Thieves’ Union on their way to the north gate. Despite all this, the two never imagined that the sight that would greet them upon their arrival at the north gate was of an alive Nightmare of Death still fighting with Gu Fei! They suddenly felt great admiration toward Nightmare of Death and shouted praises at him, “You’re pretty good!”

“It’s no big deal!” Nightmare of Death proudly accepted their praises. Gu Fei’s seven-minute performance without wounding him had boosted Nightmare of Death’s self-confidence by seven folds.

Gu Fei felt annoyed upon hearing Nightmare of Death arrogantly reject his companions’ aid. Feeling spiteful, Gu Fei did not raise his sword as intended and instead hopped in the air, executing another

roundhouse kick that brushed across Nightmare of Death's lips. Gu Fei had left two foot imprints on Nightmare of Death's forehead and right cheek, so he decided to leave his third foot imprint on the latter's left cheek.

Gu Fei admiringly eyeballed his handiwork after landing that kick. The indentation on Nightmare of Death's left cheek was lower than the one on his right cheek by half a centimeter. Gu Fei sighed. His kung fu training for his left and right legs seemed to not be in-sync by half a centimeter.

Witnessing Nightmare of Death suffer that kick from Gu Fei, the two Archers felt confused. As they aimed their arrows at Gu Fei, the two asked Nightmare of Death once more, "Are you sure you can manage?"

Nightmare of Death shook his head. Was everything before just a dream? Why's this opponent unable to hit me with his sword but able to hit me with his foot? Just what's going on here? Nightmare of Death was at a loss. Could it be that the move did not possess much damage, so the system deemed that dodging it was unnecessary? Nightmare of Death's thinking slowly deviated from the norm as he considered everything from a gaming perspective.

Gu Fei was quite occupied with preventing Nightmare of Death from escaping, so he had no free hands left to deal with the two Archers by the side. Lie Lie fortunately rushed over, roaring, "Leave these two to me!"

The two Archers no longer bothered with Nightmare of Death and aimed their nocked arrows at Lie Lie, instead.

Unfortunately the two could no longer activate Snipe, the strongest Archer skill thus far, with their drop in level, so they could only unleash their next best Archer skill, the level 24 Double Shot. The skill's Attack Power was not weak, but it had a slow activation time. This slow activation time was not designed by the game's system, but something related to a player's ability. Nocking

two arrows properly on a bowstring was naturally more troublesome than nocking just one arrow. Without any form of practice beforehand, it was truly difficult for a player to nock two arrows as fast as nocking just one arrow.

Arrows that were not properly secured and nocked would of course have trouble hitting the right targets. This was a weapon handling issue that was exclusive to Archers, which required them to have superb control of their body movement as well as hand-eye coordination to handle the bow and arrow well.

Unfortunately, not many Archers would spend time practicing their nocking skills, given that they usually fired off arrows from a safe distance or put pressure to incoming opponents just by firing warning shots. This resulted into a majority of the Archers losing their dexterity and fumbling with their hands when faced with a situation requiring them to fire arrows on the fly.

The two Archers here were obviously part of the majority; their hands trembled from the pressure of an enemy rushing toward them, preventing them from nocking arrows properly.

The left Archer was a bit quick-witted. Seeing that the Warrior Lie Lie was about to close in on them, he decided to shoot one arrow instead of two to save himself, activating the beginner skill, Power Shot. The right Archer took inspiration from this and quickly fired off an arrow on Power Shot as well. The arrow each of them shot coincidentally formed an attack similar to Double Shot.

Lie Lie reacted properly to their attacks. Swaying her body, she evaded the first arrow completely and received the second arrow's full force. She responded like this because she knew that one arrow on Power Shot would not be enough to insta-kill her or anyone for that matter. After pausing for a bit to regain her balance, Lie Lie bounded toward the two in large strides. The two Archers' hands shook even harder when she arrived in front of them. Lie Lie's ensuing bellow caused one Archer to drop his arrow in fright and

to flee, not even feeling embarrassed by his cowardly act. From a battle standpoint, as long as he kept his distance and held speed superiority in this confrontation, he would be able to run and shoot. This was a technique called 'kiting', something that a job class like the Archer must be able to do.

Nevertheless, Lie Lie also had a lot of experience when it came to PvPing. Seeing the Archer run off, she swiftly activated the level 24 Fighter skill, Spurring Meteor, which boosted her speed. She sent a fist straight toward the running Archer's waist and was fortunate enough to apply the Dizzy effect on him.

She proceeded to unhurriedly execute Heavy Punch, Uppercut Punch, and Thrusting Kick on him. Her target got hit by this trifecta combo and was hurtled upward. Lie Lie extended her hands and held on to his legs, slamming him straight to the ground. White light flashed as the Archer succumbed to death.

Her execution is faster than Coward's Savior's! Gu Fei thought to himself. While hounding Nightmare of Death, he occasionally checked Lie Lie's way of fighting. He quickly deduced that that last slam of hers was Seismic Toss. Based on Coward's Savior's movement execution speed, he would not be able to follow-up Thrusting Kick with Seismic Toss. The two Fighters Gu Fei knew had clearly allocated their stat points differently.

The remaining Archer did not stay idle while all that was happening. He took that chance to prepare Double Shot and shoot Lie Lie with it.

While the Archer was preparing his attack, Ice Glaze, who had long abandoned her role as a bystander, moved to a range where she could hit him with her spells. Summoning the level 30 Repeating Fireball spell, she majestically unleashed it upon the remaining Archer.

She really does her chanting quietly. I couldn't even hear her voice when she casted that spell this time, Gu Fei also assessed Ice

Glaze's ability following his evaluation of Lie Lie's.

A Mage's spell-casting was slower than an Archer's arrow, so dodging an incoming spell was easier than dodging an incoming arrow. The Archer sidestepped to evade the spell, only suffering a slight AOE damage as Repeating Fireball missed.

"Let me handle this!" Lie Lie yelled, stopping Ice Glaze from casting another spell. Fighters were also a melee job class, so they had an advantage against Archers that were weak in melee. Lie Lie threw a punch at the Archer, handily sending him back to the Archer Range. She then raised her arms and congratulated herself, "Winner! Lie Lie!"

Ice Glaze chuckled. Clearly, this scene was not foreign to her.

Lie Lie used up quite a lot of her internal force while dealing with the two Archers. Naturally, this so-called internal force of Fighters was what the other job classes knew as mana. Internal force provided Fighters the energy to activate their skills, just like how mana allowed Priests to heal others. Lie Lie sat down as she munched an apple to recover her internal force while hollering to Gu Fei, "You're too weak! Are you sure you can manage? Bring me in if you can't!"

Gu Fei faced Lie Lie with an envious look, "Let me give this another shot, if not I'll swap with you."

Lie Lie happily nodded her head as she instructed Gu Fei, "It seems like you've learned quite a bit of martial arts. That roundhouse kick you did isn't bad!"

"You jest," Gu Fei humbly said.

However, Lie Lie immediately followed this up, "Let big sis here advise you; that sort of kick may look good, but you shan't use it in an actual fight. It has too many flaws!"

Gu Fei did not know whether to laugh or cry, but he could not refute her words either. That roundhouse kick he had just used

was indeed a fancy move that contained many flaws.

Ice Glaze patted Lie Lie on the arm and said, “Recover quickly. Two Mages might be coming our way.” The Mage Academy was quite far from the north gate and most Mages did not have high Agility, so the two Mage companions of Nightmare of Death would naturally take some time to reach this location, but it did not change the fact that they would be here eventually.

“Is that so?” Feeling enlivened, Lie Lie quickly ate the apple and took out a loaf of bread, “I’ll be done soon!” Fruit could help players recover their internal force, while other types of food could help them recover HP.

Just as she finished eating, Lie Lie spotted a head peeking out of a corner of a nearby alley. Obviously, the furtive act was done with ill intent.

“They’re here!” Lie Lie squealed in delight. She quickly got up and headed toward that direction. The head quickly ducked inside the alley once it saw her approaching.

“Lie Lie, don’t be so impulsive!” Ice Glaze anxiously called after her as she too hurried over. Lie Lie stopped as she waited for Ice Glaze to catch up. The two arrived at the alley and looked around it; unfortunately, they did not find the person who owned that head.

“He ran off!” Lie Lie said ruefully.

Unbeknown to the two ladies, the same person had circled around them with its bow drawn and arrow trained at their heads. It was an Archer.

Lie Lie and Ice Glaze were clueless to this fact. Gu Fei, at that moment, noticed the unusual expression on Nightmare of Death’s face as he looked at the ladies’ direction. Gu Fei looked at the ladies’ direction as well. Upon seeing what was happening, he hurriedly shouted, “Don’t shoot! They’re allies!”

“Ah!” A scream rang out. The arrow had already been shot.

The furtive head Lie Lie had spotted actually belonged to Royal God Call. With his grasp of the Archer job class’ appropriate combat style, it was apparent how brilliant of an Archer Royal God Call was compared to the two from before. He knew very well the advantage of the enemies remaining oblivious to an Archer’s whereabouts. Thus, once Royal God Call realized that he had been spotted, he very calmly changed his strategic position instead of frantically using Snipe.

That alley Royal God Call had peeked from was specifically chosen by him because it had various escape routes. With his high Agility, Royal God Call easily disappeared from inside the alley and went into an adjoining alley, having a clear view of Lie Lie and Ice Glaze from his new location.

The arrow whistled through the air with a sharp sound, clearly belonging to the Archer job class’ strongest skill thus far, Snipe.

An arrow on Snipe from Royal God Call could almost insta-kill Xiaoyu. As for Lie Lie and Ice Glaze... Gu Fei shut his eyes. His heart pounded loudly as he thought of ways to explain this misunderstanding to the two ladies.

“Ah!” The ladies heard Gu Fei’s shout and turned around in time to see an arrow heading toward them at mach speed. The projectile seemed to have enough force behind it to pierce through them. By the time they managed to scream, the arrow had already arrived before them. The Snipe’s speed was truly not something an average player could evade.

Unexpectedly, the Snipe did not puncture anyone as it slipped through the small gap between Lie Lie and Ice Glaze’s heads. The ensuing gust of wind that had trailed the arrow buffeted the ladies’ faces as they paled visibly.

“Phew! That was close!” Royal God Call sighed in relief.

Upon hearing his words, Gu Fei opened his eyes and saw that the two ladies were still alive. He happily asked, “You missed?”

“On purpose,” Royal God Call arrogantly said. Nobody knew if he was telling the truth or not.

“It’s a good miss!” Gu Fei complimented.

“No, you’re missing the whole point! I purposely shifted the trajectory of my arrow; it’s precisely because my shot’s so precise that neither of them died!” Royal God Call yelled.

The illogical statement left Gu Fei momentarily speechless.

At this moment, Royal God Call’s heart was trembling, Yet another two ladies. Is Miles really that talented at picking up women? Looks like I need to test out that method he’s shown me.

“Why’re you here?” Gu Fei asked as he recalled that his fellow mercenaries should be setting up an ambush by the Thieves’ Union. What was Royal God Call doing here by the north gate, then?

“I’m just passing by!” Royal God Call positioned himself behind Nightmare of Death while he answered Gu Fei’s question, sizing up the enemy Thief.

What’re they up to this time? Gu Fei wondered inside him. They must have discussed everything on the mercenary channel. Unfortunately, Gu Fei currently had no time or ability to take a look at their discussion.

“Hey, beautiful,” Royal God Call ignored Gu Fei and greeted the two ladies instead.

Lie Lie and Ice Glaze nodded their heads at him.

Lie Lie had initially looked down on the Archer job class. Dispatching the two Archers from before reinforced her unfavorable opinion about the Archers. And yet, Royal God Call’s timely display of what Archers were capable of made her

reconsider her view and think that this expression had some merit: “There were no trash job classes, just trash players.”

The three stood by the side as they watched Gu Fei continue his performance.

“Are you his friend?” Lie Lie asked Royal God Call.

Royal God Call nodded his head.

“He’s hopeless, yet he’s not letting us help him!” Lie Lie lamented.

Royal God Call nodded his head once more, “We need to give these young ones a chance to train themselves. Otherwise, he’d never be able to accomplish anything. I’d settle that clown in two or three moves if I were to take Miles’ place, but that’d be pointless!”

You sh*tty brat! Gu Fei cursed in his mind upon hearing his words. Royal God Call was obviously using this opportunity to exact revenge on Gu Fei for disdaining him due to his young age.

“What is he practicing?” Ice Glaze curiously asked. She could somewhat feel that Gu Fei was experimenting with Nightmare of Death.

“Uhh. He’s practicing his swordsmanship,” Royal God Call casually replied. In his eyes, Gu Fei’s sword wielding was nothing short of crude.

Lie Lie immediately laughed uproariously, “Swordsmanship? What sort of swordsmanship is that?!”

Gu Fei felt upset when he heard them ridicule his kung fu due to his performance right now. Who’d imagine that this crappy style is something I’ve made up? Average people truly can’t fathom the brilliance of my style. Even if I explain the sophistry behind my action, I doubt they’ll comprehend it. I’ll just tolerate their jeering.

Royal God Call did not stop there. Wearing a mischievous

expression, he seriously said to the two ladies, “I’m gonna tell you a secret: Miles knows kung fu!”

Lie Lie once more burst into peals of laughter. Even Ice Glaze could not help herself but titter.

Royal God Call once more adopted a serious tone, “Honestly.”

“Mhm-mhm, we believe you,” Lie Lie chortled as she applauded, “Yes, what an amazing swordsmanship! HA HA HA HA HA...” She continued to laugh uncontrollably.

“He he...” Royal God Call smiled darkly. My plot succeeded! Miles must seem like a huge buffoon in these ladies’ eyes now, right? Let’s see if Miles will dare to despise me again just because he’s older!

Gu Fei naturally felt miserable upon being ridiculed by the three. He had the sudden urge to strike Nightmare of Death on the mouth once more. But seeing that the latter was already sporting three separate imprints on his face and there was no room for another indentation, he decided not to do so.

As he was thinking of Royal God Call’s purpose for coming over, Gu Fei suddenly had an epiphany.

Gu Fei’s fellow mercenaries must have realized his inability to check his messages due to him stalling for time by waylaying Nightmare of Death here. That would leave him clueless regarding their preparations. Without any way to inform Gu Fei, they had sent their fastest member, Royal God Call, over here to signal him. Such an arrangement showed the care they had in their planning. Young Master Han doesn’t just have an effeminate face, he’s quite meticulous as well, Gu Fei thought to himself. If it were Gu Fei who was doing the planning, he would likely not give every aspect of it as much thought.

Just as he was thinking of this, Gu Fei suddenly heard a thunderous voice boomed from behind him, “Royal, you got here

pretty fast.”

Isn't that War Without Wounds' voice? Gu Fei hurriedly looked behind him. War Without Wounds was not alone; he was accompanied by Brother Assist. The two were currently marching toward him. Gu Fei was becoming more and more confused as time ticked by, Just what's going on?

Without him figuring things out, another voice traveled over, “Hmm? Everyone is here. I'm the slowest?”

Gu Fei turned his head and saw Young Master Han's pretty face.

“Great, you've got him stuck here! Quickly hold him down. I'll personally settle him!” Young Master Han instructed the people around him.

Ice Glaze quickly understood everything, It turns out Miles is dragging for time. He's waiting for this person to have his chance to vent.

Nightmare of Death stared at Young Master Han in confusion, thinking, Who is this person? When did I offend him?

Gu Fei was still oblivious at what was happening. Arriving by Gu Fei's side, Young Master Han waved his hand majestically, “Alright, don't you have somewhere to be? Hurry up and log off already!”

War Without Wounds, Brother Assist, Young Master Han, and even Royal God Call – these players that had long-range job classes – came here and sandwiched Nightmare of Death in their midst.

Gu Fei stepped back. He looked bewilderedly as each of them stepped forward in succession. What's really going on? Just as his shoulder bumped against Young Master Han, he received a private message, “Head over to the Thieves' Union. Read the rest of your instructions on the mercenary channel!”

Chapter 107 - Cat Playing with a Rat

Gu Fei left the PvP field by the north gate and hurried over to the Thieves' Union. On his way there, he took the chance to thank the two kind-hearted ladies who had assisted him with the matter at hand. Although Lie Lie's purpose for coming over was to gossip, she still helped Gu Fei a bit by dispatching the two Archers.

He had originally planned to thank them on the guild channel. But when he pulled up the conversation window and saw the rows upon rows of messages constantly getting updated, Gu Fei ended up reflexively closing it as he swore in his heart to never ever open the guild channel again. He then added Lie Lie as a friend and sent the two ladies an identical message, "Thanks for your help! It's fine to leave the rest to those guys."

"You're welcome," Ice Glaze replied.

"Where are you off to now?" Lie Lie asked.

"Thieves' Union," Gu Fei answered.

"Oh..." Lie Lie seemed to have understood why he was heading there and only uttered this.

Gu Fei switched over to the mercenary channel. He then started reading the chat logs from the others and finally understood the situation.

They arranged for him to head over at the Thieves' Union because Nightmare of Death was a Thief. Since the enemy Thief was used to stealing equipment from other players, he should be very familiar with squatting in the spawn point. If he took precautions against setups at the Thieves' Union, he would definitely make his way out of the place using Stealth. Although the other members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group did not know how he did it, Gu Fei could detect a player even when on Stealth. Thus, they delegated the task of ambushing Nightmare of Death at

the spawn point to him.

“They truly don’t get it,” Gu Fei grimaced. While ‘killing intent’ was the fancy term used to describe how he detected a player on Stealth, it was actually more like Gu Fei sensing it when a person focused his or her gaze on him. The logic behind this method of perception lay in the collision of auras between people. Since martial artists like Gu Fei had been training their qi for years, the energy flowing within them had of course become more robust than non-martial artists. Thereby, martial arts practitioners could perceive the slightest collision to their auras.

(Author’s note: Don’t take this too seriously. After all, this is a YY novel so it must be treated as fantasy and not science. Please note as well: Expert martial arts practitioners are supposedly able to sense when others are looking at them to the point where they will awaken when asleep. This is in accordance to the several books and magazines that discuss about kung fu. Of course, the validity of these claims is up in the air. Hence, there is no need to focus on this passage much. Hey! If there are any outstanding martial artists who are reading this, do reach out to me regarding the veracity of this information. I will definitely be eternally grateful!)

Whatever the case might be, this method of perception needed one condition to work: A person had to focus his or her gaze on to Gu Fei. If this condition was not met, no amount of aura would allow him to detect a player on Stealth.

Young Master Han and the rest of course did not know about all this. Completely assuming that Gu Fei had a sort of high detection skill, they left the task of ambushing Nightmare of Death over at the spawn point for Thieves to him.

The pressure they had put him on was just too great. Too much pressure on oneself could easily lead to hormonal imbalances that would cause an individual’s body aura to go awry. This could also lead to a person having difficulty in sensing another’s focused gaze on him or her. Mhm! Looks like I can use that as reason if I fail to

accomplish this task, Gu Fei thought to himself.

He was never someone who easily backed away from a challenge, yet this group of misguided people had actually placed all their hopes on his aura. Is my aura that great? Gu Fei thought that this was highly unlikely. He sighed to himself as he hastened his pace. Anyway, this matter could be set aside as a future discussion.

Meanwhile, at the mailbox by the north gate, Nightmare of Death, who was sporting three large foot imprints on his face, was currently being surrounded by four men.

Brother Assist blessed his fellow mercenaries with Blessing of Health. Following this, Brother Assist, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds motionlessly watched Young Master Han summon Holy Ball, the weakest offensive skill to date in Parallel World, and throw it at Nightmare of Death.

This weak and slow skill's only merit was its piercing glow. But in order for Young Master Han to keep up the act and buy time for Gu Fei, his Holy Ball would even miss to hit its target from time to time.

Nightmare of Death flurried his dagger madly at each of them, looking for a gap to escape. Unfortunately for him, the four coordinated with one another well and maintained the tight encirclement. With Young Master Han's Heal perfectly landing on each when the need arose, Nightmare of Death's efforts were for naught.

In this situation, the four seemed like cats playing with a rat. How cruel a sight it was!

The ever curious Lie Lie and Ice Glaze stayed in the location to see what would happen next. However, the scene currently unfolding before their eyes was something even their gossiping nature could not bear to watch. Holding each other's hands for support, they left the place in a hurry.

“Where are you off to next?” Ice Glaze asked Lie Lie once they reached the end of the street.

“I’m off to find Miles!” Lie Lie answered.

“What for?” Ice Glaze asked, puzzled.

“My intuition is telling me that I can engage in a lot of PvP’s if I follow him,” Lie Lie explained.

“You PvP fanatic!” Ice Glaze could not think of any other words more apt to describe her than these.

Lie Lie laughed sheepishly. Besides her who was passionate about PvPing, all the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies were pacifists. When all headed out to grind levels, they would occasionally rub some people the wrong way. But every time Lie Lie stamped her feet in fury and tried to settle the matter with her fists, the other ladies would stop her and resolve the altercation with those people through negotiations and discussions.

Players had collected quite a lot of experience points now that almost all of them were at level 30. If they could avoid PvPing, they would gladly do so. Seeing that it was a group of female players, others would more often than not be willing to make concessions. Sometimes, they would even make compromises in favor of the ladies. Hence, altercations with them never escalated into fights.

Although Lie Lie was ill-tempered, she was not the type to provoke people senselessly. Thus, it was difficult for her to find a chance to PvP. Seeing that Gu Fei was currently doing a big show of hunting a target until the person dropped to level 0, she could barely hold herself back from giving him a hand.

Ice Glaze, who was more sensible than Lie Lie, tried her hardest to dissuade the latter from doing her plan, “Don’t give Miles more trouble than there is. Be good and let’s grind our levels instead!”

Lie Lie was not swayed and said, “I’ll just go over there and watch. If there’s an urgent situation that needs assistance, I’ll be

able to give him a hand. THAT'LL BE REALLY COOL!"

"You just want to fight!" Ice Glaze exclaimed.

Lie Lie gently pinched Ice Glaze's cheeks, saying, "If I hadn't rushed over at the north gate in time, those two Archers would've killed you!"

Ice Glaze was speechless since Lie Lie was right. Archers were the job class Mages were weak against. Just one of the two Archers back then would be enough to deal with Ice Glaze. Besides this, she had no PvP experience since she was a real pacifist. Ice Glaze still blamed herself for casting Descending Wheel of Flames to help Gu Fei earlier, as she only ended up hurting him. She criticized herself for messing things up with her lack of PvP experience.

In conclusion, she would definitely not be able to match the Archers with her skill alone. Even going against a Warrior, whom a Mage was known for being advantageous against, might not be a guaranteed win for Ice Glaze. If it was not for Lie Lie's timely arrival, things would definitely take a turn for the worse.

"Heh. I bet you're speechless! Go grind your level! I'm off to Miles' location," Lie Lie turned around and ran.

"Be careful!" Ice Glaze shouted after her. Lie Lie waved her hand in acknowledgement as she continued running onward.

Nightmare of Death' HP was being grinded down dangerously close to zero by Young Master Han's Holy Ball, but his reinforcement had yet to make an appearance. Since the opposing Mages did not possess Gu Fei's all-Agility build, coming here from the Mage Academy would definitely take them quite a while. Meanwhile, the two Archers' deaths were not in vain. Realizing that their fighting capabilities were not sufficient to deal with the enemies, they were now gathering more players to prepare for a group assault.

Naturally, Young Master Han and the others, who were also

experienced combatants, were well aware that Nightmare of Death's reinforcement was on its way. According to the information Brother Assist had collected, this gang had many members, decent equipment, great fighting capabilities, and great unity. Young Master's Elite mercenary group only had six members. It was impossible for the mercenary group to match against such a team, so every second counted.

"All-Agility Mage, have you arrived?" Young Master Han asked Gu Fei.

"Almost. I can see the entrance from my position. You guys can act now," Gu Fei answered.

Young Master Han immediately gave the order on the mercenary channel, "Finish him!"

However, the three only stood there dumbly, asking one another on the channel, "Who did this guy attack at the start?"

"I forgot..." all three collectively answered.

Young Master Han was pissed, "Look at how far we've come, yet you're still arguing over 1 PK point!"

The three stared at Young Master Han as they said on the mercenary channel, "Aren't you the same? His HP is so low; even your Holy Ball can kill him. So why ain't you doing anything?"

"I'm a pure and noble Priest. How can I allow such a dirty thing like PK value taints me?" Young Master Han asked disdainfully.

Everyone exhaled in disbelief.

"You f*ck*r!" Gu Fei, who was lying in wait at the Thieves' Union, had reason to be angered by his statement. Would that not make him similar to Super Mario, the plumber who was always going through big and small sewers?

Gu Fei did not know where Sword Demon was hiding, but his emotionless voice came through the mercenary channel, "Stop

arguing. He truly hasn't dipped into something like PK value before."

"Oh? My information on him hasn't covered that!" Brother Assist exclaimed.

"What? Is he a clean freak?" Royal God Call asked.

"Tsk!" Gu Fei clucked his tongue in displeasure.

"You guys planning to dawdle till the opponents realize we're dragging for time to set up an ambush, so that they can make their preparations?" Young Master Han asked.

Since Sword Demon was most familiar with him, he could already visualize that amiable expression decorating his face right now. As for the other three mercenaries, they were seeing this friendly smile in real time. War Without Wounds showed the decisiveness of a grown man right there and then, cleaving into Nightmare of Death without another word.

"Miles, he's dead!" Young Master Han informed him.

"Got it!" Gu Fei, who was situated right at the entrance of the Thieves' Union, peeked inside and spotted the newly respawned Nightmare of Death without the three footprints on his face. Immediately after respawning, Nightmare of Death headed outside.

"That saves me time!" Gu Fei delightedly remarked. It seemed that Nightmare of Death did not intend to activate his Stealth. He retracted his body back and watched Nightmare of Death rush toward the Thieves' Union's entrance. Just as the Thief passed through the entrance, Gu Fei jumped out of his hiding place and shouted, "Hello!"

All the nearby players, including Nightmare of Death, looked at the origin of the shout. "It's you!" Nightmare of Death said, stunned. He finally figured out what was happening.

Nightmare of Death was quite familiar with such a ploy of

camping at a spawn point. It was just that Gu Fei's 'superb' sword skill and Young Master Han's convincing act had thoroughly fooled him a short while ago.

In fact, Gu Fei's 'superb' sword skill still affected Nightmare of Death, causing him to not be afraid of confronting Gu Fei. He's just someone who can kick me but can't cause damage on me; someone who holds a weapon yet can't kill me, Nightmare of Death thoroughly believed this.

With all that in his mind, he calmly watched Gu Fei rush toward him and stab his sword forward. Nightmare of Death happily wielded his dagger to parry Gu Fei's attack...

Chapter 108 - Camping Battle

Gu Fei's sword brushed past Nightmare of Death's dagger and zeroed in on the latter's body. Gu Fei followed up his sword strike with the Twin Incineration spell, ending Nightmare of Death's life right there and then.

When Nightmare of Death revived at the spawn point, he still had that calm expression on his face. Obviously, he had yet to process what had just transpired. He was crossing blades with Gu Fei, and then he was teleported a few meters inside the spawn point. How miraculous! he thought to himself. But upon seeing that he was now at level 26, Nightmare of Death realized what had truly happened.

That was right. He lost four levels. This meant that he had died twice.

When their gang 'looted' Sword Demon earlier, Nightmare of Death accrued 1 PK point. This 1 PK point would result into him losing two levels every time he died. Since he died twice, he dropped four levels as a corollary.

His expression quickly transitioned from calm confidence to pure anger. It was quite a sight to behold.

Gu Fei, who was standing outside the spawn point, motionlessly admired his handiwork.

Nightmare of Death would surely enter Stealth mode when he came out next. Gu Fei purposely blocked the entrance so that Nightmare of Death would have no choice but to focus his gaze on to him, allowing Gu Fei to detect his aura and see through his Stealth. The only downside in this plan was if Nightmare of Death calmly ignored him. If that was to happen, Gu Fei would have no way of detecting him.

Nightmare of Death was indeed calm. He indeed calmly 'stood' at

the spawn point without leaving. Honestly speaking, Nightmare of Death did not need to exit the Thieves' Union right now, as he could just wait for his backup to arrive while inside the safe zone. Despite losing four levels after dying twice, he did not lose his clear-headedness.

Gu Fei felt annoyed and quickly sent a message to his mercenary mates, "I killed him once. Now, he's not exiting the spawn point."

Everyone was equally annoyed. Fooling an experienced combatant like Nightmare of Death into leaving the safe zone to die once more was a tall task.

"What a lucky b*st*rd!" Everyone could only remark. Nightmare of Death not dropping an item after dying twice versus Sword Demon dropping Frost Memories after dying once... could only be described as Nightmare of Death being extremely lucky.

Meanwhile, Gu Fei was feeling quite disappointed that Nightmare of Death did not take out Frost Memories to use. Had the latter done so, he would have used barehanded techniques like Kong Shou Ru Bai Ren to disarm him and potentially retrieve the said weapon. It was clear that retrieving Frost Memories from this guy would be a colossal undertaking.

Gu Fei and Nightmare of Death, who were separated by the boundary of the safe zone, glared at each other.

"Come out if you've the guts!" Gu Fei goaded. This was a cliché line used in online games to provoke others into a fight. Hunting a person was significantly harder in-game than in reality. After all, killing someone once in reality would end everything; in contrast, killing someone in game would not end everything. This was because players practically had limitless lives in MMOs. Hunting after someone day after day... Unless a deep grudge existed between the players, nobody would actually go through such a never-ending hunt. In most cases, players would gather their friends to a certain location and have a huge showdown with their

adversaries. The cliché phrase, “Come out if you’ve the guts!” would be uttered by one side to incite another side into starting the brawl. Unintentionally, Gu Fei used such a cliché line right now. He should not be blamed for saying such an overused phrase, though. After all, he had yet to experience such clashes in-game.

Nightmare of Death of course would not make things easy for Gu Fei. At the moment, he was rumbling darkly while mocking Gu Fei’s idiocy internally. Would it not be akin to Gu Fei welcoming his death if he continued to block off the entrance alone? Nightmare of Death sincerely hoped that his buddies would arrive soon and pulverize the man. “I lost four levels, so we gotta kill this guy and his friends at least four times. Oh, right! There’re those two chicks as well... Guess twice each will do,” Nightmare of Death was still in the mood to demonstrate his kindness, albeit only toward the women. The mindset of going easy on women was evidently ingrained deep inside the male population in the gaming community.

As he reveled at the thought of exacting vengeance, Nightmare of Death forgot to ask Gu Fei why he was getting pursued relentlessly.

Gu Fei and company were naturally glad that he did not remember to ask such a question. As long as Nightmare of Death remained oblivious of Sword Demon’s connection to their hunt, they would have higher chances of retrieving Frost Memories. How would they know who Frost Memories would end up with if their opponent had dozens of men to pass it over? This was why Sword Demon had not revealed himself all this while.

“What’s the situation over there?” Young Master Han asked.

“We’re in a stalemate,” Gu Fei replied.

“Why aren’t you leaving, then? His backup is coming,” Brother Assist informed him.

“If his backup is few, I’ll just kill them all. If there’re many, I’ll enter the safe zone. There’s no problem either way!” Gu Fei said.

“How bold!” The few experts were impressed.

“Miles, what’s your PK value?” Sword Demon asked worriedly. He was the most touched by Gu Fei’s efforts. Everything Gu Fei did thus far was for his sake, after all.

“6 PK points... Oh, wait. It’s 7 PK points now!” Gu Fei was in tears.

“Tsk! Tsk!” All clucked their tongues.

“We’re on our way now. We’ll hide in the shadows and assist you when you need it the most,” Young Master Han reassured him.

“No need. It’s better if you guys guard the mailbox. He may go to a mailbox to send Frost Memories out in the event that I’m forced to stay inside the spawn point if an overwhelming force arrives here,” Gu Fei rejected.

“That makes sense,” Young Master Han said. He then went ahead and arranged the rest in position.

“Come out you, runt. Come out!” Gu Fei continued his taunting.

Nightmare of Death pretended to not register Gu Fei in his eyes. Occasional passers-by would stop to watch what was happening while inquiring about the matter to nearby players. This put pressure on to Nightmare of Death, as the current situation made him seem like a coward. His opponent was just one man, yet Nightmare of Death was fearfully staying inside the safe zone. That was just far too cowardly. Thus, players would throw him a disdainful look first before leaving the Thieves’ Union.

The scornful gazes of others made Nightmare of Death anxious. Fortunately for him, the current circumstance would not last for long. His buddies just sent him a message saying that they were about to arrive at the Thieves’ Union.

“You’re a loser. Good for nothing. Despicable. I’m not gonna fight with you anymore. Bye!” Gu Fei flung a few more insults at him before turning around to leave.

Nightmare of Death felt flustered. It was as if he was in a YY novel. After experiencing a turbulent growth period, he was about to become a peak existence that disregards all before him when the novel went on hiatus. How depressing would that be? With that thought in mind, Nightmare of Death rushed out of the safe zone and roared, “Stay if you’ve the guts!”

With Nightmare of Death’s first step outside the safe zone, a fiery glow engulfed him as he heard the word “Incinerate”. His vision blurred as he lost his senses for a moment, and then he found himself back in the safe zone once more.

Gu Fei’s figure appeared by the entrance, “You called? Haven’t gone that far yet!”

Nightmare of Death’s whole body shook visibly as his chest was filled with extreme vexation.

“Ah! You dropped something,” Gu Fei bent over and picked up the item, “Dual Serrated Dagger? Is this yours? He he!” Gu Fei briefly glanced at it before tossing it away with a swing of his hand.

Gu Fei had two reasons for doing this. First, he wanted to infuriate Nightmare of Death further. Second, Gu Fei wanted Nightmare of Death to think their mercenary group was not interested in anything he owned.

The surrounding spectators hummed in envy when they heard the three words ‘Dual Serrated Dagger’. It currently dealt the highest damage among all the known daggers. As the best dagger right now, even a white-tier of it could be sold for dozens of gold coins. However, the crowd was more shocked when Gu Fei casually tossed it aside as if the dagger was trash.

Several players nearby disregarded their image as they pounced on the thrown dagger like a pack of hungry wolves. One among them succeeded in snatching Dual Serrated Dagger for himself. Checking its description window, he jovially exclaimed, “It has Bleed status effect!”

The Bleed status effect meant that a wound created on a target's body using the dagger would incessantly bleed, causing the target's HP to continuously diminish. It would undoubtedly increase the efficiency of grinding monsters and afflict a troublesome condition to an opponent in PvP. Since Priests had yet to learn the Cure skill as of date, the only way to recover from open wounds under the Bleed effect would be to use blood-clotting medication or bandage. Who would have the time or ability to bandage oneself up during PvP? Therefore, it was clear how troublesome an opponent would be in a fight if he or she was wielding such a weapon that could readily create bleeding wounds.

Gu Fei once threw a flying dagger at Xi Xiaotian to cause that same effect; he also nearly succumbed to this effect after taking Xiaoyu's Cyclone previously. However, those status effects were applied purely by chance. Something the system would 'bless' a target with a status effect after taking into account the character's level of injury. It was a separate case from equipment that had the Bleed status effect additional trait.

Selling the strongest dagger thus far with its Bleed effect for 100 gold coins was easy. Therefore, the crowd was speechless that Gu Fei had casually tossed it aside.

Gu Fei remained indifferent to this revelation and only flashed a bright smile to the lucky recipient of the thrown Dual Serrated Dagger.

The crowd now inexplicably felt a sense of favorability toward Gu Fei. They began helping Gu Fei ridicule Nightmare of Death. Nightmare of Death felt extremely aggrieved; Gu Fei had clearly killed him for no rhyme or reason. How did he become the wrongdoer in this situation when he was the one who lost his weapon after getting killed by Gu Fei?

Gu Fei also did not expect his plan of killing two birds with one stone would create a third favorable outcome. Seeing the expression of anguish on Nightmare of Death's face, Gu Fei sent

out a message on the mercenary channel, “Sword Demon, you should really come by and have a look at this guy’s face right now. I guarantee that it’s ten times more worth it than killing him.”

“What did you do?” everyone asked curiously.

“I killed him again after I tricked him into coming out. It’s a shame he dropped his dagger instead of Frost Memories,” Gu Fei lamented.

“It’s easier to drop equipped items than stored items.” Regardless of the situation, Brother Assist loved to share his nuggets of information to others whenever he had the chance.

“Hopefully, he’ll equip Frost Memories next,” Gu Fei gazed at Nightmare of Death in anticipation.

Regrettably, Nightmare of Death no longer dared to clash with Gu Fei. Instead, he focused his energy on to the conversation window as he hurried his buddies to rescue him.

“We’re here. Just waiting for the rest,” someone replied.

“What’re you waiting for?! F*ck him up now!” Nightmare of Death’s hatred toward Gu Fei had now infused into his very being.

“There’re only a few of us. He’s got many people on his side,” one of his buddies said.

“Where? It’s just him alone,” Nightmare of Death asked.

“Are you kidding me? That group of players outside the Thieves’ Union, of course!” his buddy sputtered.

“Those are just onlookers. Don’t mind them!” Nightmare of Death insisted.

“Is that so?” his buddy asked, suspicious. It was common for people to watch a fight, but it was rare to see a crowd participating in the taunting. Looking at the spectators, he heard a few of them curse loudly at Nightmare of Death. Even more joined in to chant en masse, “Come out! Come out! Come out if you’ve the guts!” How

were these people ‘just onlookers’? They were clearly here to challenge him!

“They’re truly just onlookers!” Nightmare of Death was on the verge of crying, “Just come over and finish this guy off already!”

“We’re here! We’re here!” Several of his buddies realized that squeezing through the crowd to assess the situation would not pose danger since no one knew them. One of them faked ignorance and asked a player beside him, “Bro, what’s happening? Why is it so lively here?”

The player pointed to the spot where Gu Fei was, “That bro’s way too amazing. Some matter caused him to hunt that other guy. He didn’t bother looking at the dropped equipment and just tossed it away. That guy inside...” The player now pointed at Nightmare of Death, who was squatting inside the safe zone, and continued his explanation, “That guy’s a coward, though. A person who used to possess Dual Serrated Dagger with Bleed effect must be a pro, right? But he’s now huddled inside the safe zone not daring to even squeak. He he... useless!”

Although their friend was being scorned before their eyes, these few men instead felt glad as they learned that this crowd was truly just a bunch of onlookers. Only Nightmare of Death’s cowardly actions had caused this crowd to throw in their lot behind Gu Fei. Everything would be ending soon, though. They would end that guy’s arrogance here. These men all caught one another’s gazes and uniformly leaped forward.

“They’re here!” Nightmare of Death slapped his thigh, discarding his misery. He did not care that his cry would alert Gu Fei. From his perspective, nothing was scary about the lone Gu Fei anymore as seven of his friends had come to rescue him.

Gu Fei faced backward when he heard the sound of movement from his rear and saw seven men standing there. They stared daggers at Gu Fei, silencing the crowd at once. The onlookers were

very aware of what was happening. Joining in on the taunting was just them having fun; now that the PvP situation had worsened, they quickly shut their mouths to avoid being implicated along with the offending party.

“You guys are finally here,” Gu Fei drawled, adding, “I’ve been waiting for such a long time.”

The seven glanced at one another as they became more vigilant of their surroundings. Could this be an ambush? they thought to themselves. However, nothing strange could be found around them at all.

Gu Fei stared at their attire and pointed at each of them, “Mage? Archer? Warrior? Thief? Priest? Knight? You...” Pointing toward the last man, Gu Fei hesitated for a moment before asking, “Are you a Fighter, then?”

“I’m a Warrior, too!” The last man answered indignantly. This person could identify the rest of their job classes with a glance, so why could he not tell what was his own?

“What a pity!” Gu Fei had a face full of regret, “If you were a Fighter, wouldn’t that mean that the seven main job classes were here? Each with its advantage. Your team would be spectacular, just like the Calabash Brothers!

The seven looked at Gu Fei as they ruminated on whether his words contained a deeper meaning or just crazy talk.

“You should leave!” Gu Fei said to the second Warrior of the bunch, “Swap with another Fighter. That way, when seven people with different job classes lose against me later, the seven Calabash Brothers may still stand a fighting chance if they fuse into a Calabash Titan.”

“F*ck!” They never imagined that the person would make a fool of them by acting silly. They each angrily took a spot to surround the person.

Gu Fei sighed. He doubted that taking care of these seven men would be difficult. At this rate, his PK value would increase by 7 points.

“Ring of Fire! Release!” Gu Fei raised his sword and issued the command, casting the spell that Mages could obtain upon reaching level 6. It was a beginner spell and the weakest out of all the defensive spells. This spell’s manifestation was not flashy, but it would look like an actual ring of fire if the proficiency of the spell was high.

It was a pity that Gu Fei’s proficiency for this spell was currently zero, so it only appeared as a flame orb that circumvolved his entire body. His plain and solitary form became more pronounced with the seven men encircling him.

Looking at this scene before them, the seven men laughed riotously. The Warrior, who still held a grudge for being teased as a Calabash Brother, said sarcastically, “Oh, boy. Your flame orb is truly fearsome. We’re quaking in our boots!”

“Is that so? You better not come any closer, then,” Gu Fei advised faintly.

“Oh, yes! I won’t dare come near you,” the person said as he strode confidently toward Gu Fei. He was a Warrior. He knew very well how insignificant the damage Ring of Fire could deal to Warriors like him.

In the blink of an eye, the Warrior was now within the AOE of Gu Fei’s Ring of Fire. With low proficiency, the spell’s damage output was also small. The Warrior was just standing beside Gu Fei. The rotation speed of the flame orb was slow as well, floating around like a ghostly flame that could lose its buoyancy at any moment. Once the Warrior stepped within the spell’s AOE, he actually dared to stare at it and guffawed, “Oh, dear. Your flame orb is about to float into me. I’m gonna die! Save me!”

Just as his voice faded away, the floating orb really entered the

Warrior's body. At that same moment, Gu Fei pulled out Moonlit Nightfalls...

Gu Fei's two-pronged attack caused the Warrior to be replaced by a short-lived white light. The seemingly innocuous flame orb continued to orbit Gu Fei. He shook his head and sighed, "You left so delicately, just as you came so daintily." Flinging his sleeves, Gu Fei raised his head, "Next."

The remaining six men exchanged looks. They could not tell how the Warrior had died. Did the Ring of Fire kill him? As they were very logical gamers, none of them believed a whit of this nonsensical truth. They suspected that there was something dubious beside Gu Fei or that there was a long-range attacker hiding among the crowd.

The Mage among the six men waved his magic staff, "Fireball! Shoot!"

A ball of fire flew out.

"Perfect timing!" Gu Fei shouted. Placing the sword by his face, he cleaved the incoming Fireball. He had long wanted to try this out. The Fireball spell's tracking ability was quite inconvenient to dodge every time. Gu Fei recalled how Xiaoyu had previously dissipated that attack with a hack of her axe; he felt that such a method would be quite effective when it came to dealing with Fireball.

Following the flick of his sword, the ball of fire exploded mid-air. Gu Fei felt heat spreading out from the ball of fire's explosion. He took a look at his HP bar and saw that a bit of it had been chipped off. It seemed like the ball of fire he had cleaved contained a bit of AOE damage. But since it was just a bit, it was not a hindrance to him.

"Don't be fooled by that guy. Quickly gang up on him to finish him off!" Nightmare of Death was madly hopping in anxiety within the safe zone. In his opinion, Gu Fei had no choice but to

provoke the group into attacking him singly because he was outnumbered. Gu Fei must have tricked the Warrior into approaching him to eliminate the latter through an unknown method, leaving the rest of the group clueless and suspicious. Just a small act of cleaving the ball of fire from Gu Fei was enough for everyone to see him differently. Just how hard could it be to disperse a slow-moving ball of fire with a sword?

This bunch of idiots! Nightmare of Death cursed in his mind. He verbally urged them, “This person is all bluff. He’s just one man; nothing to be scared about!”

“Let’s go!” The six men growled through clenched teeth as they pounced on Gu Fei from all sides.

The still undefeated Gu Fei flourished Moonlit Nightfalls to create a sword cordon just like when he was being surrounded by the Past Deeds’ members before. Now that he knew the usefulness of employing spells, Gu Fei began to coordinate Twin Incineration with his kung fu. With that, Gu Fei’s weak damage output had been fixed unintentionally. While this was not the solution he had hoped for, the fact that he was now a lot stronger remained.

The six men’s encirclement did not even enter Gu Fei’s eyes. With a few quick flashes of his sword and the rotating flame orb’s damage output, the rushing Warrior, Knight, and Thief screamed in terror.

“What is this?!” the Warrior yelled as he saw his HP suddenly get halved. He was different from the Warrior that had died before; he had an Endurance build so he had an abundant HP. Thus, the significant damage he had just received left him frightened.

“Quickly heal me!” the three fearfully vied with one another for the Priest’s Heal, knowing that Priests currently could only heal one target with each bestowal. The team’s Priest was at a loss of what to do, so he randomly bestowed Heal on one of the three.

Gu Fei did not care who got saved as he casted Twin Incineration

on them once more. He had grasped the essential aspects of this spell after repeated usage. This spell would produce a flare of light that would ignite a target. The flare would light a weapon if a player was equipped with one and would flash between the fingers if a player was barehanded.

Twin Incineration attached itself differently from Fireball toward a target. Just like a lit matchstick, the spell would easily set whichever target on fire. Unlike Fireball that would explode upon contact with its target, Twin Incineration would linger for a short while. This meant that any target in contact with the flare on Gu Fei's weapon would be set ablaze. In other words, as long as Twin Incineration was used properly, it would be able to apply damage within an area just like Ring of Fire.

Most Mages would consider it good enough if their intended target ignited once by the flare that they had casted. As for the all-Agility Mage Gu Fei, his fast movement was able to manipulate Twin Incineration into setting ablaze a radius of one hundred eighty degrees. If he added more points to Agility in the future, he would be able to launch an attack radius of three hundred sixty degrees or even seven hundred twenty degrees.

The Twin Incineration Gu Fei had casted just now incinerated everything within its radius of one hundred eighty degrees, killing off the Thief and Knight in one sweep.

The Warrior with abundant HP got healed by the Priest, so he thought he could survive all this. As he thought of this, Gu Fei's flame orb burningly passed through him. The Warrior retreated in shock, yet the much faster Gu Fei immediately closed in on him. Lifting the sword in his hand, Gu Fei chanted, "Fireball! Shoot!"

With this three-pronged attack, the Warrior was unable to withstand the damage. White light came and went in the same way that his fellow Warrior had left.

Gu Fei pointed the tip of his sword next to the Mage and Archer

who had been looking for an opportunity to attack alongside the Warrior, Knight, and Thief. Unbeknown to the enemies, Gu Fei's attention was actually focused on the man behind him. He did not forget that his original goal was only Nightmare of Death.

At the time when the six men were encircling, he saw in his peripheral vision Nightmare of Death activating Stealth and skulking away.

The Archer and Mage had already realized Gu Fei's might and no longer dared to face him head on. They began running to and fro within the crowd outside the Thieves' Union, looking for a chance to attack Gu Fei from a distance. However, to their horror, Gu Fei did not move slowly like most Mages. In a few quick dashes, Gu Fei quickly closed in on the enemy Mage. Swiftly slashing his sword, Gu Fei killed the Mage before the latter could even squeak a word.

When he saw Gu Fei chasing the Mage first, the Archer thought that he could use this chance to quickly nock an arrow and attack. However, he had not expected Gu Fei to make short work of the Mage. In the next moment, Gu Fei bounded toward the Archer.

Shooting an arrow from within the small crowd was hard for the Archer. His shooting preparation – nocking an arrow, pulling the bowstring, aiming at a target, and letting loose an arrow – was greatly hindered by the cramped space as well. As a corollary, Gu Fei reached the Archer before the latter could fire an arrow. The Archer's shaking hands caused him to shoot an arrow with an unsteady flight.

At this moment, a sharp scream echoed from within the crowd. When the Archer took this chance to flee, Gu Fei did not give chase. This was because he could feel a familiar killing intent radiating from behind him. "He's here!" Gu Fei muttered as he took a step forward.

The figure that had appeared beside Gu Fei was accompanied by a loud "F*ck!" Nightmare of Death's heart was in turmoil, "Why did

I attack while this guy was stepping forward?!” He did not realize that Gu Fei had intentionally stepped forward to dodge his attack.

“I’m here!” a voice rang from within the crowd once more just as Nightmare of Death faded into view. A fiery red figure dashed out of the clustered players, but Gu Fei paid no attention to the person. His focus was on Nightmare of Death’s hand that was now gripping Sword Demon’s Frost Memories.

Gu Fei would wager his life and level if that was what it took to retrieve Frost Memories. He put his sword back inside his dimensional pocket and prepared to risk it all.

However, Gu Fei did not expect that the target of the person who had yelled “I’m here!” was not him but Nightmare of Death. At this very moment, the person got right in front of him and heaved Nightmare of Death upward with a “HA!” Gu Fei failed to extend his arm fast enough to stop the person. He could only watch as the person tossed Nightmare of Death out of the crowd along with the dagger, Frost Memories.

The person, Lie Lie, then gladly said to Gu Fei, “Thank goodness I arrived in time to save your neck!”

“YOU MORON!” Gu Fei bellowed as he rushed out of crowd without a backward glance.

“F*ck! What did you say?!” Lie Lie angrily asked. She clenched her fists and chased after Gu Fei.

Chapter 109 - Frost Memories

Nightmare of Death did not fall to his death after being tossed out of the crowd. Knowing that Gu Fei was right behind him, he did not try to enter the safe zone again. Instead, he quickly climbed to his feet and ran away.

“Pardon me! Make way, please!” Gu Fei shouted as he squeezed his way through the crowd.

These surrounding players were naturally supportive of Gu Fei’s pursuit of Nightmare of Death. Right now, however, quickly making way for Gu Fei could not be accomplished just because they willed it as they were clustered together. Although the clustered players moved away from one another as best as they could, Gu Fei still had to exert colossal effort to squeeze through them.

With Gu Fei’s low Strength, he found it easier to fight the seven Calabash Brothers than to squeeze through the crowd. Lie Lie, who was closely following behind, incessantly yelled “Hold it!” at him. Gu Fei was super mad at her right now and he struggled so much to stop himself from stabbing her with his sword. She might have seemed to be lending a helping hand out of the kindness of her heart, but Gu Fei knew that she had tossed Nightmare of Death away hugely because she wanted to show off. It was truly hard to find her likeable.

By the time Gu Fei got out of the crowd, Nightmare of Death had already distanced himself from Gu Fei by over five hundred meters. It was a distance that even the Repeating Fireball spell could not reach. Without a way to kill Nightmare of Death at such a distance, Gu Fei could only run after him.

Thieves had inherent advantage when it came to Agility. Hence, the now level 24 Thief Nightmare of Death benefited more from Agility than the level 31 Mage Gu Fei. Furthermore, the additional 25 points to Agility from equipping Frost Memories and the 14%

boost to movement speed from wearing Shadow Boots allowed Nightmare of Death to run at a decent pace. Fortunately, Parallel World's calculation of the data for movement speed of each character was very precise. After chasing for a while, Gu Fei's slightly faster speed than Nightmare of Death's began to show and the distance between the two gradually shrank.

From time to time, Nightmare of Death would look over his shoulder as he continued running onward. His heart beat faster and faster when he saw Gu Fei get nearer and nearer. He wanted to request for backup, yet he did not dare send a message out while running. That action was akin to reading a book while running; he risked the possibility of tripping or running into a tree – or, worst of all, getting caught by Gu Fei. Nightmare of Death did not want to die this time no matter what. He was now at level 24; dropping another level would lose him his Stealth skill.

The Stealth skill was undoubtedly the Thief job class' specialty and what made Thieves valuable. Any Thief would spend substantial time grinding the proficiency of this skill. Nightmare of Death was no exception. Just the thought of losing the time and effort he had placed into grinding Stealth's proficiency sent a shiver up his spine.

Since he could not send out a message while running, Nightmare of Death could only employ the most primitive method of asking for help, "SAVE ME! I'M OVER HERE!" He hoped that a nearby comrade would hear his cry for help, but what he got instead was the surrounding players' disdainful look. While PvP's were always occurring in online games, a PvPer crying for help was a seldom seen cowardly act.

In the blink of an eye, the two participants of the high-speed chase were about to reach a junction at the end of the street. The sight of the junction was evidently not favorable to Gu Fei. This was because it would be a lot harder to chase after Nightmare of Death if he took a turning, changed into a disguise, and mixed into

the crowd. It just so happened that the streets around this area had a lot of pedestrians as well. Everything seemed to be going in favor of Nightmare of Death.

As Gu Fei had predicted, Nightmare of Death, who was running ahead of him, really took the turning without a second thought when he reached the junction. By the time Gu Fei took the turning as well, not a shadow of Nightmare of Death's running figure could be seen. Who could tell which among these pedestrians Nightmare of Death was?

Gu Fei carefully walked down the lane, looking at every player left and right, yet he could still not find a trace of Nightmare of Death.

Gu Fei helplessly sent a message on the mercenary channel, "Sorry. I think he escaped!"

"How?" "I got careless and he managed to bolt out of the safe zone," Gu Fei reported, regretful.

"It's alright. We know what he looks like now; we've still got opportunities in the future."

"Frost Memories can't be retrieved at this rate! We were so close, too!" Gu Fei was extremely disappointed. He knew that the chances of Frost Memories dropping were not high, but an opportunity had presented itself a short while ago. He was so close to actually snatching it back, but....

"Hey!" As he was mulling over this matter, he heard someone by his side call him. Gu Fei turned around and saw that it was Lie Lie. He immediately closed the distance between them and grabbed her collar, "Why are you still following me?"

"What are you doing? Let me go!" Lie Lie was not so easily unnerved by Gu Fei's action given her combative personality.

Some pedestrians stopped to watch the scene unfolding. Gu Fei recalled that Lie Lie was a lady. Thinking that his action was a

little uncalled for, he let go of her and fumed, “Stop following me.”

“What’s the matter with you?! I’m just trying to help you!” Lie Lie said confrontationally.

“You gave him the chance to escape when you tossed him out!” Gu Fei bellowed, equally confrontational as his patience finally snapped.

“If I hadn’t tossed him out, he would’ve plunged his dagger into you! With you as a weak Mage, he’d definitely insta-kill you!” Lie Lie confidently voiced out her assessment.

“Are you blind? Didn’t you see that I already evaded his strike?” Gu Fei asked.

“Stop bluffing!” Lie Lie refuted, not believing him. The average player truly had no way of realizing that Gu Fei had dodged Nightmare of Death’s Backstab previously. Besides Gu Fei and Nightmare of Death himself, no one among the people present at the Thieves’ Union could tell that Backstab had already been fully executed. Those around, including Lie Lie, thought that Backstab was still in the process of being executed. Thus, Lie Lie fully believed that had she not timely intervened, Gu Fei would have been stabbed with the dagger.

Gu Fei did not know how to explain it, and he was too lazy to find a way to do so anyway. He simply coldly repeated, “Just stop following me.”

“You’re so unreasonable!” Lie Lie cried in frustration.

“If I’m really unreasonable, you’ll find yourself dead,” Gu Fei coldly retorted.

“Alright, then. Fight me!” Lie Lie initiated an attack, hurtling her fist toward him.

Gu Fei parried her fist using his open hand. With that punch deflected, his leg apathetically hooked hers and dragged it toward him, sending Lie Lie sprawling to the ground on her back. A cloud

of dust scattered about.

“Not everyone will let you do as you please just because you’re a woman,” Gu Fei said icily, “Stop hindering me from now on.” With that, he turned around and left.

Lie Lie finally got scared. She dazedly lifted her upper body off the ground and arranged herself into a sitting position. Gu Fei had tripped her backward with ease. Lie Lie was sure that he had done so without using a skill or spell in the game. She had studied a bit of kung fu, so she understood something from this exchange: Miles knows kung fu... He was also much stronger than her by who knew how many folds. He really was someone who knew kung fu.

Gu Fei scoured the entire lane after abandoning Lie Lie, but he saw no signs of Nightmare of Death. He could only heave a deep sigh and send a message to the rest of the mercenary group, “I couldn’t find him anymore. Which mailboxes are you guys camping? I’ll go keep watch on one, too.”

“West gate is unguarded. Go there!”

“Okay!” Gu Fei acknowledged, closing the mercenary channel. He raised his head to get his bearings and spotted a lady beckoning him with her hands, an enigmatic smile on her face. The lady was Xi Xiaotian.

“I’m in a rush; talk later!” Gu Fei waved his hand in greeting. He then lowered his head and prepared to be on his way.

“Don’t be so hasty!” Xi Xiaotian ran up and blocked Gu Fei.

“I’m really in a rush!” Gu Fei insisted.

Xi Xiaotian smiled, pointing at the still seated Lie Lie on the ground, “You went overboard there!

”Gu Fei glanced back, “You may wanna take that back. Or else, I don’t know how you’ll be able to describe me if I twist her head off.”

“Is the matter that serious between you two?”

“I’ll tell you about it when I’m free. I’m really busy right now,” Gu Fei got around Xi Xiaotian and quickly ran off.

Xi Xiaotian did not let him off. She turned around and caught up with him shortly.

“What?” Gu Fei asked.

“You run yours, and I’ll run mine. Why do you care?” Xi Xiaotian retorted.

“You’re quite fast,” Gu Fei commented. Not many were an extremist like Gu Fei who had invested all points into Agility. Even some Thieves and Archers would not be as fast as him.

“I went with a full-Agility build. Plus, I’ve the job class advantage,” Xi Xiaotian explained.

“Oh... What’s your job class?” Gu Fei recalled that he still did not know Xi Xiaotian’s job class even now. Determining her job class through her attire was impossible. When Gu Fei first met her, she was wearing a purple robe. He now knew that that robe was what a Priest would wear. At the moment, she was wearing a thief cape.

“Archer,” Xi Xiaotian’s answer indeed did not reflect her outfit of the day.

A full-Agility Archer would of course not be slower than Gu Fei; it was considered as the job class that benefited the most from Agility.

Gu Fei nodded his head and did not say another word.

“Are you off to kill people?” Xi Xiaotian tried to engage him in small talk.

“Hopefully...” Gu Fei said. Indeed, he was hoping that Nightmare of Death would appear by the west gate’s mailbox.

No further words were exchanged between them along the way. Gu Fei sprinted his way to the west gate, as Xi Xiaotian followed

him all the way. Gu Fei eyed her oddly many times over, but she pretended to not see any of them.

Gu Fei sighed in relief when he saw that Nightmare of Death was not at the west gate's mailbox. He had rushed here as fast as he could. If Nightmare of Death rushed here from their previous location, he should not be faster than Gu Fei even if he tried his best.

Gu Fei retreated to the side of the road. If Nightmare of Death spotted him from a distance, he would of course not go near the mailbox, especially since it meant his death. Gu Fei settled himself into a corner and trained his eyes on the mailbox. Suddenly, he slapped his forehead, "I'm so stupid! I know that Nightmare of Death will be the one holding on to Frost Memories, so why didn't I just patiently wait till he had to mail it from the start? If he wants to mail something, he'll naturally take it out of his pocket to put it into the mailbox! Earlier, a bit of effort and skill would be enough to snatch that weapon back!"

Currently, Gu Fei was feeling very remorseful for that kick he had sent to Nightmare of Death upon their first meeting over at the north gate's mailbox. This meant that he had not lost one but two great chances to retrieve Frost Memories from the Thief.

That method of retrieval could not be employed any more. Back then, Nightmare of Death allowed Gu Fei to be beside him and acted very courteous toward Gu Fei as if he was a dear friend. Currently, Nightmare of Death would loudly squeal for help if Gu Fei so much as came within fifty meters of him. Stealing Frost Memories now when he took it out would be a nigh impossible task. Gu Fei was so regretful that he wanted to smash his head to a wall.

"Why do you suddenly look so remorseful?" Xi Xiaotian asked.

"I'm such a dummy. Really!" Gu Fei lamented.

"I agree," Xi Xiaotian nodded her head.

Gu Fei heaved a long sigh toward the heavens, finally asking Xi Xiaotian, “Why’re you following me, anyway? If you want to help, I need to set down all the rules and restrictions to this matter, so you won’t make the same mistake that Lie Lie did.”

“Who’s here to help you? I’m here to mail something,” Xi Xiaotian replied mockingly. With that, she walked toward the mailbox.

Gu Fei listlessly swept his gaze over her. Xi Xiaotian got to the mailbox and turned her head back to look at Gu Fei. She saw that he was busy looking at the many nearby roads. Xi Xiaotian smiled gaily as she reached into her dimensional pocket and took something out. She knocked her knuckles on the side of the mailbox to get his attention, “I’m gonna mail it!”

“Just mail it already, what’re you yelling at me for?” Gu Fei said as he threw her a glance before turning his attention back to the roads in the vicinity. It was then that his brain registered the familiar object in Xi Xiaotian’s hand. He did a double-take. In her hand, a dagger was giving off a bluish white glow. Gu Fei could identify what it was without the Appraisal skill. He instantly darted over to her, and his hand tightly gripped Xi Xiaotian’s wrist.

“Why do you have it?!” Gu Fei demanded, his eyes turning cold.

“Why don’t you make a guess?” Xi Xiaotian’s smile was dazzling.

Gu Fei did not say anything. Frost Memories was still in Nightmare of Death’s possession when Gu Fei was chasing after him. Xi Xiaotian could only acquire it sometime between Nightmare of Death taking a turning into that lane and her calling out to Gu Fei.

“Actually, you’re right from the start; I’m indeed in cahoots with them,” Xi Xiaotian confessed. As the color of Gu Fei’s face changed, she continued, “But you missed one bit. I’m in cahoots with them, but I’ve a different intention.”

“To mix into their gang in order to cheat off their top-grade equipment after gaining their trust?” Gu Fei asked.

“More or less. I guess you can call it scamming the scammers,” Xi Xiaotian said with amusement.

Gu Fei laughed. Seeing that his hand was still holding on to her wrist, he let go immediately.

“Aren’t you afraid I’ll send this away?” Xi Xiaotian dangled Frost Memories in front of his face.

“You won’t show it to me if you intend to,” Gu Fei remarked.

“I may have shown it to you, but that doesn’t mean I’m returning it,” Xi Xiaotian teased.

Gu Fei refused to humor her.

“Besides, it’s not yours. I didn’t get this from swindling your friend, too,” Xi Xiaotian did not stop.

Gu Fei remained mum.

“What’s wrong? Cat got your tongue?” Xi Xiaotian asked.

Gu Fei was indeed speechless. Xi Xiaotian was currently a third party that had obtained Frost Memories. He could not hold Xi Xiaotian responsible for Nightmare of Death and gang’s despicable action of stealing that weapon. Moreover, the method she had used to obtain the dagger might not exactly be proper. But if she had gotten the dagger through the legal method of buying Frost Memories from Nightmare of Death, what should Gu Fei do?

If this were in reality, one could say Frost Memories was a stolen item and any relevant transaction pertaining to it was invalid under the law. Right here, right now, in an online game, Gu Fei truly could not say the same.

“Ha ha ha ha ha! To think I’d see the day when you would be speechless,” Xi Xiaotian felt very pleased with herself. She offered Frost Memories to him hilt-first, “Here you go!”

“Wha... A kind gesture?” Gu Fei took it and examined it carefully. It was indeed Frost Memories.

“I’m only returning this because that guy’s your friend,” Xi Xiaotian informed him cheekily.

“That’s a lot of face you’re giving me,” Gu Fei smiled brightly.

“Well, I don’t particularly hate you,” Xi Xiaotian reasoned.

Gu Fei laughed.

“Also, it felt great to see you trip up Lie Lie. I don’t really like that brat, either,” Xi Xiaotian said.

“Had you said it earlier, I would’ve brought her head over to you,” Gu Fei was feeling particularly jovial now that his sorrow had faded away. While Lie Lie did not seem as hateful as before anymore, he figured it was fine to play along with Xi Xiaotian. “Seriously though, how did you get it?” Gu Fei asked curiously.

“I swindled it back,” Xi Xiaotian put emphasis on the word ‘swindled’. “I don’t think you’ll be interested to hear the process.”

“Try me,” Gu Fei urged her.

“As I’ve just said I managed to get myself recruited into their gang. While I’m not an important member, I’m able to employ tricks on those people to make them misjudge my value,” Xi Xiaotian explained vaguely.

“What sort of tricks?” Gu Fei pressed on.

Xi Xiaotian stared at him, “Are you thinking of something impure right now?”

“Uhm, I’m actually not thinking of anything. I’m just curious,” Gu Fei answered.

“Some tricks. Like acting like a big shot... Go ponder it more yourself!” Xi Xiaotian dismissed the question casually.

Gu Fei nodded his head, “So that’s how it is.”

“Apart from that, it’s also because of your ‘antics’. You persistently hunted Nightmare of Death, yet he did not know why,” Xi Xiaotian said, bemused.

“We purposely deceived him. Otherwise, he’d definitely transfer the ownership of Frost Memories,” Gu Fei explained.

“And that’s exactly what I told him,” Xi Xiaotian giggled.

Gu Fei found it absurd, “That’s all it took for him to pass Frost Memories on to you?”

“Isn’t it really simple?”

“Logically speaking, it’s very simple. The hard part is earning his trust, right?” Gu Fei asked for confirmation.

“In his moment of crisis, I helped him resolve the problem. His trust in me naturally soared. It’s human nature,” Xi Xiaotian elucidated.

“What problem did you help him solve?”

“You failed to catch him, right?” Xi Xiaotian asked, smiling once more.

“You hid him?” Gu Fei suddenly realized.

“I only reminded him that he’s a Thief, so he should know how to use Stealth,” Xi Xiaotian elaborated further.

Gu Fei nodded his head. He and Lie Lie attracted so much attention when they fought down that lane. After cruelly causing the beautiful lady to fall on her back, their squabble became more eye-catching. It was impossible for Gu Fei to discover Nightmare of Death who was on Stealth under a situation where many people were focusing their gazes on to him.

“Think you got the gist of it?” Xi Xiaotian asked, adding, “Anything else you want to say?”

“Thank you,” Gu Fei expressed his gratitude readily.

“Don’t thank me,” Xi Xiaotian laughed daintily, “There will still be times when you’ll hate me.”

“Is that so?”

“Of course!” Xi Xiaotian confidently nodded her head.

Chapter 110 - What a coincidence

“Alright. There’s nothing else now, so I’m taking my leave,” Xi Xiaotian said.

“Since you’ve swindled Frost Memories away from them, they’d probably take their revenge on you. It might be best if you stick to me,” Gu Fei offered.

“Don’t worry about that. I have my ways,” Xi Xiaotian flashed him a smile before turning around and leaving.

Gu Fei stood rooted to the ground for a moment or two.

“There will still be times when you’ll hate me.” This statement of Xi Xiaotian echoed in his ears repeatedly. He somewhat understood what she meant by it. Although she aided Gu Fei this time, Xi Xiaotian was still a swindler through and through. If Gu Fei was troubled by her swindling ways in the future, he might end up hating her.

Nonetheless, it seemed that he had been very unjust to her! When Xi Xiaotian stole Sword Demon’s Frost Memories, he was very outraged by her actions. Now that she swindled Frost Memories back from that gang, he was singing a different tune. The words Xi Xiaotian had said were very clear: Sword Demon could only get Frost Memories back because he was Gu Fei’s friend. In other words, if that top-grade equipment belonged to another player, she would pocket it without a second thought.

If that had been the case, what would I have done? Gu Fei was at a loss.

As he was pondering on this issue, a message came through the mercenary channel, “What’s everyone’s status?” It was from Young Master Han.

“Great,” Gu Fei answered.

“What do you mean?” Young Master Han asked.

“We can call it a day now!” Gu Fei said.

“Ahhh?!” everyone exclaimed in surprise.

“Meet you all at Ray’s Bar,” Gu Fei left it at that. Such an exciting story was best told in person; saying it on the mercenary channel was far too emotionless.

Gu Fei was the first to arrive since Ray’s Bar was closer to Yunduan City’s west gate.

“Hey, Ray!” After his excursion in Yueye City, the sight of these familiar faces in Yunduan City really made him feel all warm and fuzzy.

“Long time no see!” Ray smilingly greeted Gu Fei. Since this was an online game, there were a few routines very different from reality. An example was the in-game taverns; the same person could visit a tavern to drink liquor several times in just a day. Thus, if a player did not visit a tavern for even once in a day, he or she could be considered as a long-time-no-see patron.

“How’s business lately?” It was rare to meet someone who provided service with utmost sincerity like Ray, so engaging in small talk with other tavern owners was almost impossible.

Ray smiled, “Same old, same old.”

“Six glasses of liquor,” Gu Fei waved his arm casually as they headed toward the room that they usually occupied.

“There’re people there!” Ray hurriedly called after Gu Fei.

“What?” Gu Fei did not hear him clearly and continued to walk toward the room. It was boisterous inside the bar, so hearing each other clearly became harder the more distance the two put between them.

Ray did not answer him anymore as Gu Fei had already lifted the entrance curtain of the room.

“Eh... What a coincidence!” Gu Fei said in greeting to the people

inside the room when he peeked in. They were the ladies of Amethyst Rebirth.

Lie Lie was seated at the center of the room. Her eyes were puffy as if she had just cried her heart out. July on the left and Luo Luo on the right were consoling her. Only Ice Glaze was seated on the other end of the table, fiddling with her sleeve. She looked as if she wanted to say something but did not know how to do so.

When Gu Fei stepped inside the room, the four ladies lifted their heads. “Continue chatting; I’ll go somewhere else,” Gu Fei did not wish to intrude.

“Don’t leave!” July stopped him as she stood up.

“Is there something wrong?” Gu Fei played the fool.

“Sit down!” July ordered as she sat down once more.

Ice Glaze shifted to the side and made space for Gu Fei to sit.

“Thank you!” Gu Fei smiled. This lady was really nice, especially when compared to Lie Lie. Seeing his suddenly appearance, Lie Lie showed a wanting-to-cry-again expression. The pained look on her face seemed capable of producing salty tears with just a squeeze.

While Gu Fei already considered Lie Lie’s sin as something minor after obtaining Frost Memories, his dislike for the lady remained the same. He sat himself down. His expression was no longer frosty like before, but he made no move to comfort the lady and merely smiled as if nothing was unusual. Ice Glaze felt somewhat awkward about his attitude, so she tugged the corner of Gu Fei’s sleeve and gave him a look.

This lady’s truly kind! Gu Fei thought to himself. With her passive personality, Ice Glaze must currently be feeling distraught at finding herself entangled in such a difficult situation. Wanting to extricate Ice Glaze from the situation, Gu Fei spoke, “Shall we order something to drink?”

Gu Fei’s words made everyone feel faint. July was the first one to

recover. Since it seemed that Gu Fei did not intend to broach the subject, such a task would naturally fall on to her, the guild leader.

“What happened between you two? We’re all in the same guild. Talk things over if there’s a problem. No need to be so stiff about this.” July was being very objective about the issue and did not appear to be taking sides. Her position as a guild leader compelled her to mediate the issue with zero bias.

Luo Luo also spoke, “It’s true that Lie Lie is a bit impulsive, but I’m sure she hasn’t done it with any ill intent. I’ll apologize on her behalf if she accidentally offended you or caused a setback in whatever crucial task you’re on!” Luo Luo’s words were far more powerful than July’s. She lowered herself to an equal standing and took the initiative to apologize. At the same time, her voice carried a somewhat jesting tone. It somewhat conveyed the message to Gu Fei that her apology was not completely sincere. Thus, he should probably....

Gu Fei suddenly found all this hilarious. He noticed the similarity between July and Luo Luo’s pair and Sword Demon and Young Master Han’s combination. Between the two men, Sword Demon always took the lead while Young Master Han acted as his support in other MMOs. However, Gu Fei could tell that while Sword Demon was the one who acted as the guild leader, Young Master Han was the one who did all the planning and made all the decisions. Based on his narcissistic personality, Young Master Han was not the type people would easily find likeable. It was possible for him to lead a small mercenary group composed of familiar people, but it was a different matter when it came to leading a large guild. A guild he would try to lead was highly likely to fall apart in less than a week. In contrast, Sword Demon was loyal, was heroic, handled affairs delicately, and minded the little things, which made him the perfect man to lead any group of players. This was wholly demonstrated in Yueye City. Instead of a high level of intelligence quotient, it was preferable for a leader to have a

certain air and temperament.

As for the pair of July and Luo Luo... Honestly speaking, Gu Fei felt that July's temperament was not as good as Sword Demon's. Although she had the impartiality found in guild leaders when it came to dealing with matters, her attitude was far too solemn that it made it difficult for people to believe that that was her true nature. Meanwhile, Gu Fei had always felt that Luo Luo was the remarkable one. She was great at handling affairs, had a cool composure at all times, and could get right to the crux of an issue with a few words. She definitely had the makings of a guild leader.

"Miles, what do you say?" Gu Fei was mum for quite some time, so July asked him once more.

"Oh, it's nothing. I've already forgiven her," Gu Fei answered uncaringly.

Luo Luo also felt like fainting this time. Her carefully phrased words for this delicate matter were easily resolved by Gu Fei. Although his wording was not as clever as hers, he managed to resolve it by being thick-skinned.

Once again, Gu Fei found something laughable. Lie Lie was known for her quarrelsome personality, yet she was currently keeping her silence and depending on Luo Luo and July to speak for her. He he... Guess she's all bluff and bluster.

"In that case, shouldn't Miles apologize as well? You did cause Lie Lie to fall down on her back at a busy street," July said helplessly.

"Sure. But she must apologize first since it's her fault in the first place," Gu Fei demanded mildly.

Lie Lie finally exploded, "Didn't I already apologize?"

Her self-righteous behavior really makes liking her difficult! Gu Fei thought disdainfully to himself. Sighing, he showed a smile that did not reach his eyes, "You need to bear some responsibility. Is it you who just apologized to me? It's Luo Luo speaking on your

behalf, right?”

If Gu Fei’s tone did not have a hint of disdain and ridicule, Lie Lie would probably not pursue the matter further. She had a quarrelsome behavior, after all. Ignoring July and Luo Luo’s coaxing, she bawled, “Don’t stop me! I must ask him, what did I do wrong? I ran over to help him! Is that wrong?!”

Gu Fei quickly fixed his evaluation of Lie Lie’s personality. She was truly not a dog without a bite. It was only the concerted efforts of July and Luo Luo that had kept her muzzled until then. But since she asked, Gu Fei gladly told her, “Where did you go wrong? Did you know that person took my friend’s top-grade dagger? I put a lot of effort into making him come near me so that I could snatch back the dagger, but you actually tossed him out! Where am I gonna go to find him now?” Since he had gotten Frost Memories back, Gu Fei’s tone was not very forceful.

Nonetheless, his empty words still left Lie Lie speechless. July, Luo Luo, and Lie Lie had once witnessed Gu Fei disarming and taking No Smile’s dagger, so they knew he was truly capable of doing it. Therefore, his opportunity to reclaim that weapon from Nightmare of Death more or less made sense.

“I... I didn't know!” Lie Lie’s indignation disappeared, sputtering as she tried to explain away her mistake.

She’s pretty cute if she isn’t so arrogant and self-righteous! Gu Fei thought to himself, noting the deflated look on Lie Lie’s face now that she knew her mistake.

“Miles, where’s that dagger now?” July asked.

“I don’t know,” Gu Fei answered. Naturally, he was not going to tell them he had gotten Frost Memories back. The weapon was swindled back by Xi Xiaotian. He did not know if she had other plans in mind over the equipment-looting gang; casually revealing the dagger’s whereabouts like this might invite trouble to her.

“If that’s the case, I’ll pay back what Lie Lie owes to your friend!” July declared.

Everyone was shocked. Any equipment, once it was deemed as top-grade, would cost thousands of gold coins.

Gu Fei finally understood where July’s élan to be the guild leader came from. Just as he was about to say something, another person lifted the entrance curtain of the room.

“You?” Luo Luo and the newcomer asked the same thing at the same time. The newcomer was...

...Young Master Han.

Chapter 111 - The Story of Digression

Crap! was Gu Fei's first thought when he saw Young Master Han. Currently, only the members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group and Will-low were aware of his fierce Close Combat Mage persona. Besides them, the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies were possibly the closest to uncovering his secret.

Had a Mage job class, visited Yueye City, skilled and adroit, and was acquainted with Young Master Han... The more similarities the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies found, the easier they could piece things together and discover his hidden identity.

He turned around and saw that July and the other ladies were indeed staring at him suspiciously.

I'm about to be exposed. But upon considering this matter from a different perspective, Gu Fei realized that it might not necessarily be a bad thing even if his other identity got exposed. The only people he had provoked were No Smile as well as Silver Moon and his guild in Yueye City. Fugitive 27149's image on the forums was still considerably positive, the PvP matters he had instigated were often reasonable, and nobody painted him as a PK terrorist so far. Most of the players hot on 27149's trail were either innocuously curious of him or admired him. If people like No Smile came to look for revenge... Gu Fei smiled. How exhilarating would it be if he could fight endlessly? He had no other word for it but 'awesome'!

However, Young Master Han quickly killed Gu Fei's fantasies of such a wondrous outcome.

Hiding their identity was Young Master Han's idea. Masking themselves was also his creation. All this while, he was the one with the greatest concern about the possibility of them being exposed to other players. Thus, how could Young Master Han's expression be the straw that broke the camel's back right now?

He simply swept his gaze around the room before smiling indifferently, “What a crowd!” Without looking at the ladies again, Young Master Han lowered his head to address the seated Gu Fei, “We’ve managed to retrieve the item you requested.”

Young Master Han was pretending to be doing a transaction with Gu Fei, making it look as if the latter was an employer of Young Master’s Elite mercenary group.

How cunning! Gu Fei marveled in his mind. It would be awkward if he spoiled the cover-up that Young Master Han was weaving for him, so he could only play along by asking, “Oh? Where is it?”

“It’s not on me. I’ll send it over in a moment,” Young Master Han had on a poker face.

“Thank you so much,” Gu Fei numbly acted his part.

Young Master Han nodded his head, “I’ll leave you to your chat, then. I’ll look for you later.” With that, he bade the others farewell and left the room.

Luo Luo swiftly stood up, strode toward the room exit, lifted the curtain, and looked around. She then chased after Young Master Han before returning in a short while.

“How is it?” July was anxious – or was she excited, perhaps?

Luo Luo shook her head in response, “It’s still just him alone.”

July looked disappointed, as Lie Lie said, “What a pity!”

In that instant, Gu Fei and Lie Lie’s matter seemed to have been tossed into the clouds.

“What’re you all doing?” Gu Fei asked, faking ignorance.

“Miles, did you hire them to retrieve the item your friend lost?” July asked Gu Fei.

Gu Fei nodded his head.

“Young Master’s Elite mercenary group,” July murmured, before

asking, “Do you know who the members of that mercenary group are?”

“Nope,” Gu Fei shook his head.

“Fugitive 27149; have you heard that moniker before?” July inquired further.

“Of course,” Gu Fei affirmed, expounding, “I heard he’s quite a powerful Mage.”

“Quite powerful? More like, very powerful! The most powerful one to be exact! I don’t think anyone else would be more powerful than him!” Lie Lie shouted; the look of admiration on her face made Gu Fei feel very uncomfortable. Big sis, that’s me right here! If there’s ever a day when my other identity gets exposed, how’re you going to face me? Gu Fei thought to himself, adding, Besides, I’m well-aware of how super awesome I am. I’m only being modest right now, okay?! Gu Fei was quite confident of his ability. Displaying the same level of exultations as Lie Lie... Although the others would not know that he was praising himself, Gu Fei would still be cringing inside from saying such words.

“That 27149 is a member of Young Master’s Elite,” July informed him.

“Oh!” While Gu Fei gave an appropriate reply, he did not know if the expression he was making was fitting. After all, he was not that great of an actor unlike a certain narcissistic, pretty-faced individual.

“I was the cause of that matter with No Smile in this city. We got Young Master’s Elite mercenary group to aid us...” July gave Gu Fei a run-through of what had happened with Past Deeds, thinking he was clueless about it. If awards were to be given from this matter alone, Gu Fei would definitely get the Best Male Lead, Most Valuable Player, Most Patient, and Most Vicious Slayer Awards. In fact, with how this issue was progressing right now, a Lifetime Achievement Award would eventually be in the bag for Gu Fei.

“So I see! So I see!” Hearing July’s narration, Gu Fei could only nod his head and agree along.

“I really wish I could meet this strongman. It’s a pity we don’t have the chance,” July sounded regretful.

“I’m sure there will be a chance in the future,” Gu Fei consoled.

July registered that as a polite comment, so she did not put it to heart. She merely smiled and said, “I hope so, too!”

“Currently, getting acquainted with that person depends entirely on Young Master Han. But he is far too cautious. Notice how it’s just him when he came over to discuss things with you? There’s not even a trace of those companions of his,” Luo Luo observed.

It turned out that she had previously bolted out the room so quickly to chase after Young Master Han and learn the identity of the other players with him. Gu Fei sighed. If he was correct in his guess, Sword Demon and the lot must be next door. At most, they would be in the room after the next. As for the one they wished to meet the most, he was actually right in front of them.

“But it appears that he frequents this bar. He conducted his transaction with us here, same as Miles,” Luo Luo said to July.

July nodded her head in agreement, “This establishment is very close to our guild house, so we can swing by when we have nothing on.”

“Wait a second!” Luo Luo lightly slapped her forehead with her open palm as she excitedly said, “If he’s a regular, Ray must know Young Master Han. Maybe, he knows who the people he hangs out with, too!”

“That’s true!” July’s eyes shone as she quickly lifted the curtain to call Ray over.

Ray hurried over, “Is there anything missus wish to order?” Humble and attentive were Ray’s style. Gu Fei’s heart leaped to his throat. Although he was not too worried of revealing his identity

any longer, it would be very awkward if his identity was revealed right now.

“A certain person arrived and left not too long ago. He looks very... very... uhm, a very beautiful man. Do you know him?” July momentarily could not find the right words to describe Young Master Han’s ethereal beauty.

“Ah, Young Master Han?” Ray nodded his head.

“You do know him!” July was excited.

“I can refer you to Young Master Han if you’ve business with him. Young Master’s Elite is the strongest mercenary group in Yunduan City. Looking for the group to help with quests is a wise choice. Besides, you can also look for him for specialized work,” Ray said.

“Specialized work?”

“Like killing people to level o,” Ray whispered. Players could directly use the interface window in the Hall of Mercenaries to enlist the help of mercenary groups regarding quests and ilk, and the system would automatically provide the mercenaries details for the relevant quests. As for personal matters or requests between the players, such as ‘killing people to level o’... Firstly, it was naturally frowned upon. Secondly, using the Hall of Mercenaries to enlist help for such matters would be as good as informing the target of their intention before acting; the element of surprise would be lost. Thirdly, the system would not openly endorse such acts, so there was no way for the system to assess such matters.

There was a limit when it came to interpersonal trust in online games, which was expressed by the reliance of players on the system when mercenary groups were hired to help in quests. Players would publish their quests in the Hall of Mercenaries, passing the reward to the system directly. Once a mercenary group picked up a quest, everyone would head out to accomplish the job

together. Only when a player's quest was completed could a mercenary group retrieve the reward that had been passed over to the system from the Hall of Mercenaries.

The system could tell whether a quest was completed from the players' quest log. However, it would be hard for the system to judge the completion of the task assigned when it came to dropping people to level 0 or bounty hunting missions. There were so many ways to die, such as dying to monsters in the grinding map and being killed by other players... The system could not tell if it was part of the plan or coincidental.

That was how the 'specialized work' tag came to be. This sort of missions outside of the usual line of work was usually negotiated in private that did not involve the system's assistance. July and the other ladies did not know of the term, but the act was precisely what they had asked for from Young Master's Elite when the mercenary group dealt with No Smile for them.

"We don't have any mission at the moment. I just wanna ask if you know anything about his mercenary group," July asked Ray with anticipation, adding, "Or perhaps, what sort of people he usually meets while he's here."

Gu Fei did not stay idle at this moment as he was quickly trying to add Ray as a friend. He intended to privately message him for a bit, but Ray did not open his request to be friends yet. July's question had cut straight to the crux of the matter, so all Gu Fei could do was let fate take the wheel.

"I don't know," Ray actually shook his head.

"You don't know?" July was stunned. Gu Fei was stunned as well, and his expression this time was not fake.

"I've never seen him with any familiar faces," Ray reiterated.

"Oh..." July was despondent once more, adding, "Sorry to have bothered you, then."

“Do you all want something to drink?” Ray’s business face was back on. They were all seated in a room in Ray’s Bar, but they had yet to order even a glass of water or alcohol. It would just be bad business sense if he did not badger them about it now.

“Alright,” July ordered some wine and passed the coins over.

“Your drinks will be served shortly,” Ray stepped back to lift the curtain. Before he left, Gu Fei, who was staring at him, saw his mouth curve upward in bemusement.

Young Master Han has already contacted him! Gu Fei sighed in relief. That man really thought of everything. Luo Luo was several steps behind him in comparison.

Ray returned with the drinks in no time. There was a glass for everyone.

At the moment, everyone was thinking about the matter with Young Master’s Elite mercenary group and Fugitive 27149. They had long since forgotten about their original intention for gathering here. This was the magnificence of the digression effect. Legend had it that when women got together to chat, the ensuing flow of discussion would be so unrestrained and unpredictable.

The atmosphere turned frigid in the next moment. July brought her glass to her mouth and took a sip. Her previous melancholy and longing when she talked about 27149 had long since disappeared. Gu Fei could tell that she was about to resume the previous matter, so he quickly raised his glass and said, “Well, you all have heard it, too. Since that dagger has been retrieved, I guess we should bury the hatchet. There’s no need for apologies after all, and we are all still good brothers and sisters. Lie Lie, did it hurt when you fell?”

“Ah? Nope, it didn’t,” Lie Lie replied absentmindedly.

“Mhm, that’s good then. Come on, everyone... Cheers!” Gu Fei called out.

The ladies were briefly shocked before raising their glasses from the table and clinking them together.

Gu Fei down the content of the glass in one draft. “Alright, I’m taking my leave first,” Gu Fei put down his glass and got up.

The ladies did not say another word as they waved their hands to send him off.

Gu Fei spied that the silent Ice Glaze had barely sipped her glass and was about to place it down. Vaguely recalling her nickname that Lie Lie mentioned in passing, he said jokingly, “[Xiao Bing](#), my friend, remember to finish your drink!” With that, he pushed the curtain away and left.

Xiao Bing (小冰) - is the nickname for Ice Glaze (冰琉璃)

Chapter 112 - War Without Wounds' Image

After leaving the room that the ladies were occupying, Gu Fei checked the room next door. As he had expected, the five people of Young Master's Elite mercenary group were indeed gathered inside. "I knew you guys would be here," Gu Fei said triumphantly.

"Be honest! What's your relationship with all those ladies? No wonder you were being very protective of them last time," Young Master Han probed.

"Ahh... We just happen to know each other," Gu Fei tried to pass it off. When everyone looked at him dully, he said weakly, "It's true. Ha ha...."

"Speak the whole truth and we won't be too harsh with you," everyone said in unison.

"Shhhh! Quiet! They're still around! You see, they really wanna know the members of our mercenary group. They admire us greatly," Gu Fei shared this tidbit.

"That bunch of gossiping women," Young Master Han sighed in frustration.

"Royal, what are you doing?" Gu Fei saw Royal God Call stand up sneakily, intending to go outside.

"Nothing. I just wanna take a stroll around..." Royal God Call said as he continued to head outside.

"Grab him!" Young Master Han yelled.

Royal God Call was pulled back to his seat by War Without Wounds who had stood up. "Brothers! It's an all-female guild! They happen to idolize us; shan't we give them a chance to do so?" Royal God Call's heart was in pain as he bemoaned.

Everyone sneered at the idea.

"What a child..." Gu Fei flashed him with that same old look of

disdain.

“That’s right. Royal, you’re too immature,” War Without Wounds chided Royal God Call solemnly.

“See, that’s what I call a mature man,” Gu Fei looked at War Without Wounds with admiration.

War Without Wounds turned to face Gu Fei, “Miles, I don’t care where that group of women came from or your relationship with them, I just wanna ask you something!”

“What is it?” Gu Fei asked.

“When do you plan to introduce us to them?”

Gu Fei was instantly left speechless.

Of all the six men of Young Master’s Elite, War Without Wounds was the one he was least familiar with. He usually did not have much to say, silently arriving and taking his seat when it was time to meet and quietly getting up and leaving when it was time to go. War Without Wounds seemed to be older than everyone here by quite a lot. Gu Fei thought that he had difficulty conversing with everyone else besides matters related to gaming due to his age – hence, the taciturn nature he gave off. Whereas Gu Fei thought of Royal God Call as the brattiest of the brattiest, he judged War Without Wounds as the epitome of maturity. Indeed, he was not wrong, as the difference between the two could clearly be seen from this issue alone.

Royal God Call had this immature idea of reaping the benefits by capitalizing on the ladies’ feelings of admiration to him. War Without Wounds, meanwhile, had this mature idea of getting to know the girls directly through Gu Fei, with the traditional mindset of having Gu Fei matchmake for him. Whatever the case might be, the two had the same goal in mind: to pick up girls.

“No need to waste time on that! Wounds, let’s use this chance while they’re still interested in us to reveal to them that we’re part

of Young Master's Elite mercenary group. An opportunity like this won't come twice," Royal God Call persuaded. It seemed that he intended to form a team with War Without Wounds and pick up the 'mission' of getting to know the ladies.

"You two together?" Gu Fei laughed, but he did not say anything further.

In the end, it was Young Master Han who heartlessly voiced what Gu Fei had wanted to spit out, "You two standing side by side – one is obviously too old, while the other is too young – aren't you two afraid that they'll treat you as father and son?"

"Picking up chicks as a father-and-son combo? That's rather fresh. I'd love to see you two try," Brother Assist was hooting with laughter.

War Without Wounds and Royal God Call looked at each other. "Sh*tty old man, get the hell away from me!" Royal God Call rasped. "It's you who should get away from me, sh*tty shota!" War Without Wounds countered.

"Settle down. You two should not waste your efforts. That bunch of women is only interested in who our Mage is," Young Master Han said.

"Miles! Do you intend to swallow them all?!" War Without Wounds and Royal God Call glared at Gu Fei.

"Wounds..." Gu Fei said in a very pained voice, "Your image in my heart has been utterly ruined today."

"Image may be precious, but love's more valuable!" War Without Wounds recited.

"G*dd*mm*t, I should've chosen to be a Mage!" Royal God Call's regret only deepened.

"It's not about your job class; it's a matter of your temperament," Gu Fei patted him.

Brother Assist could stand it no longer, “Oh, woe is the heavens! Is humility a virtue?”

The mercenary group’s members had begun an all-out roast; insulting, attacking, disdaining, and slandering one another, until Sword Demon asked, “Miles, what exactly did you call us here for?”

Although Sword Demon did not speak very loudly, everyone still heard him clearly. They immediately simmered down and felt a wave of shame rush over them. This was especially the case with Gu Fei, who had just arrived after spending some time with the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies. Digression, isn’t that a woman’s patent trait? And yet, here’s a bunch of men doing the very same thing? All began to check themselves.

Gu Fei took out Frost Memories and gave it to Sword Demon.

“You got it back?” everyone asked the obvious.

Gu Fei smiled proudly.

“It’s a miracle!” Sword Demon sighed in disbelief.

“Really?” everyone squinted. If this was a miracle, then what would Sword Demon dropping Frost Memories with one death be?

“Frost Memories. I’ve dropped it thrice now, and I’ve gotten it back every time. If that’s not a miracle, then what else could it be?” Sword Demon reflected.

All held in their shock. Calling such a thing that happened in sequence a ‘miracle’ was indeed accurate.

“All three times were thanks to Miles helping,” Sword Demon added.

Gu Fei froze. In his mind, he had helped Sword Demon only in two occasions! Thinking for a bit, he realized that Sword Demon had included their first PvP with each other; it was true that Sword Demon’s Frost Memories was indeed taken by Gu Fei during that

fight.

Not one reacted much to this revelation. Having the best understanding of Gu Fei's capabilities, they were already numb to his prowess. This was especially the case after Royal God Call had revealed to them about Gu Fei's Midnight Spirit Robe and Moonlit Nightfalls. Everyone felt even more impressed upon being able to justify his monstrous strength.

They were all top experts in the online gaming community; having such a character like Gu Fei pressure them was honestly not a great feeling. However, everyone could swallow this reality easily since he was a good friend to everyone and was not a particularly vain person.

"Now that that matter is settled, can we get back to talking about this group of babes?" Royal God Call asked.

"What babes? Are there really that many babes? That guild has about twenty ladies, and only a few of them are good looking," Gu Fei refuted.

"Twenty! Do you know all of them?" Royal God Call was astonished.

"Alright! I'll come clean. I'm... I'm a member of Amethyst Rebirth, too," Gu Fei disclosed.

"WHAT?!" That was the biggest revelation of the day. They did not even react this strongly when Sword Demon was killed and his equipment was looted.

"Isn't that guild known for only accepting women?" Royal God Call asked, skeptical.

"It's all a big misunderstanding." Gu Fei felt sorry for himself as he gave them the synopsis of that past event, "I accidentally nominated their guild, which resulted into me becoming a part of them. The guild only had a minimum amount of members, so they didn't let me quit."

“F*ck! Why didn’t this sort of misunderstanding happen to me! Quit? Why would you wanna quit?” Royal God Call asked, mystified.

“Because they don’t seem to be welcoming me,” Gu Fei answered.

“Yeah, you’re right. It’s an issue of temperament. If it were me, the situation would definitely be different,” Royal God Call had this look of fantasizing a scenario where he would capture all the ladies’ hearts in one-go.

Everyone regarded him with contempt.

“But recently, their number has gone up to twenty-one. I’m thinking of quitting now!” Gu Fei shared emphatically. He had originally decided to not leave the guild after that little talk with Luo Luo back then. But after that recent fiasco involving Lie Lie, Gu Fei felt that it might be for the best if he left Amethyst Rebirth, seeing that his relationship with all the ladies of it was currently on tenterhooks.

The culprit for Gu Fei’s lack of a gentlemanly bone was his family’s upbringing of him. His family of kung fu practitioners’ view of the world was rather traditional and evidently placed more regard in men than in women. It was a good thing, therefore, that Gu Fei was of the new generation, which made him more open to modern trends. Still, the traditional way that Gu Fei had been raised somewhat juxtaposed with his modern learning. This included his thinking that men and women were equal. Thus, he treated women just like how he would treat men. Gu Fei might indeed appear more lenient or show more restraint toward ladies, but that was not because they were female but because they had naturally weaker bodies. In fact, if Gu Fei met a feeble man, he would treat him with leniency as well, just like how he did with women.

“Why are you quitting?!” Gu Fei’s thinking was clearly illogical to people who had Royal God Call’s mentality.

“You’re still a kid; you won’t understand,” Gu Fei sighed.

“F*ck!” Royal God Call was pissed.

“If it’s not too big a problem, then it’s better if you stay,” Young Master Han suddenly advised.

“Why?” Gu Fei asked.

“For us who are in this line of work, it’s important to have many sources of information. I’d prefer it if we split up into different major guilds. Just like how Royal God Call provided us plenty of intel and convenience last time by being in Traversing Four Seas Guild—I believe everyone still recall that incident?” Young Master Han addressed everyone.

All nodded their heads.

“Based on our capabilities, it shan’t be difficult to be accepted in any guild. But this sort of guild that is purely composed of women is difficult to infiltrate. Since you’ve managed to be part of one, you should stay in it for a while,” Young Master Han reasoned.

“But it’s only a twenty-woman guild,” Gu Fei retorted.

“Don’t look down on it. There’s naturally something special about this sort of all-female guild,” Young Master Han remarked. All these gaming experts nodded in agreement with his assessment.

“If that’s the case, I guess I’ll hang around for a bit more!” Gu Fei relented.

Royal God Call nodded his head repeatedly, “What you should do at the earliest is find out everything you can about those twenty beauties, such as their three sizes, and report back.”

Gu Fei gave them a withering look, “Is that why you all want me to stay in that all-female guild?”

Young Master Han involuntarily said, “Sometimes that truly is the case. But now that we’re in a full-immersion game, this sort of

information isn't that difficult to collect anymore. A lecherous information expert can probably get all that by using his eyes alone."

"F*ck off! All of you!" Gu Fei was clearly not interested in doing such things.

"Alright. If there's nothing else, let's all get back to our own business!" Young Master Han adjourned the meeting.

"Come here Miles. I wanna have a nice talk with you for a bit!" War Without Wounds dragged Gu Fei to the side. "Wait for me!" Royal God Call quickly chased after the two.

Sword Demon put the dagger back inside his dimensional pocket as he got up.

"Where are you off to?" Young Master Han asked.

"To a grinding map after killing those losers!" Sword Demon said coldly.

"Go level up first. We'll set up a proper plan for that matter soon," Young Master Han advised.

Sword Demon nodded his head and took his leave.

"What about you?" Young Master Han gazed at Brother Assist.

"I've caught wind of something on the forums. Seems like Parallel World is about to be officially released!" Brother Assist shared.

"Oh?" Young Master Han raised his eyebrow with interest.

Chapter 113 - Sending Themselves to Us

Forums, especially the official forums, were commonly treated by any game company and players as a medium for them to communicate with one another. The game company looked through and collated the players' suggestions and messages via the forums. They also released certain announcements on the forums to keep the players updated and gauge their reactions to those news.

As for the forum moderators, they were made up of the game company's staff and hired professionals with experience in the aspect. But whichever category they belonged, they would always obtain this sort of insider information one step ahead of the average players.

Brother Assist managed to establish a lot of connections in the community of forum moderators owing to his active participation in many major online games' forums. Parallel World's moderators were no exception. A close forum moderator friend of Brother Assist in this game informed him that Parallel World had been currently doing well, so the official release of it to the market might begin soon.

"Oh? Will they introduce a new, huge feature or change during it?" Young Master Han asked. Game companies usually presented new, large features or changes during the official release of their games so as to maintain the attention of the current players as well as to attract new gamers.

Brother Assist smiled, "Given Parallel World's monopoly of the VRMMO market, why does the game company need to do such gimmick?"

"True," Young Master Han nodded his head in agreement.

"Officially releasing to the market only means that they won't limit the amount of accounts available. The biggest change will

just be the player influx in this game,” Brother Assist said, adding, “Besides all that, my friend didn’t say anything else.”

“Having more players is a good thing. As long as it doesn’t break the server,” Young Master Han muttered. Resistance to change was something ingrained into long-time MMO players. While players hoped that there would be more population in a game to create a bustling environment, they would also worry that too much population in it would result in lag and similar server problems. It seemed that players did not have it easy either, as they could only live on with these conflicting thoughts.

On the other side of the room, Gu Fei was being bodily held down by Royal God Call and War Without Wounds as they grilled him for details. “Information! Information!” both demanded.

“What information?!” Gu Fei was feeling annoyed at these two.

“The names of the babes; their personality!” the two persisted.

“I don’t know anything other than their IGNs right now; personality is even more out of the question,” Gu Fei told them. He could not help but think of Lie Lie with her volatile personality. He wondered how these two would react when faced with a lady that had such personality.

“You’re so useless! You’ve been in that guild for quite some time now, yet you don’t even have a bit of information about those beauties?” Royal God Call moaned.

“Miles, it’s not that this big bro here is mocking you, but you’re really too much of a goody-goody! Look at Royal. He’s young, yet his grasp on this stuff is already quite high,” War Without Wounds said.

Gu Fei’s idealized image of War Without Wounds had already been extinguished as he helplessly shrugged his shoulders.

“Forget it. Just tell us the names of those babes you know!” the two demanded.

Getting the ladies' names was easy for Gu Fei, as he only had to read out every IGN listed on the guild tab to the two men. However, names in online games did not just function as such; they were equivalent to acquiring a person's phone number in reality. Once a player found out the IGN of another, he or she could add that person as a friend, allowing the player to endlessly harass the other with messages. Thinking of that, Gu Fei was even more afraid to casually give these two the ladies' IGNs, even if the name belonged to Lie Lie whom he did not like.

"What's wrong? Spit it out!" Royal God Call asked with a puzzled look on his face. He had just fished out a booklet and a pen out of his pile of newly bought booklets and pens. A neat title was written on the booklet's cover page: 'Babes Information Booklet'. Flipping over to the first page, his pen was poised to write down anything Gu Fei would say. And yet, Gu Fei remained unforthcoming.

"What's wrong Miles? Aren't you even willing to help us a lil' bit?!" War Without Wounds' expression turned cold. It was obvious that in his and Royal God Call's hearts, any information about the ladies should be shared and not be kept as a secret.

"Sigh... I'll help you guys ask, I guess!" Gu Fei was really helpless. He had no wish to privately leak other people's information, but he could not say no to Royal God Call and War Without Wounds, either. His only choice was to directly ask for the consent of those ladies.

The ladies in the next room did not simply idle. When Gu Fei left, they quickly began their discussion.

"Lie Lie, isn't that guy the Priest at the north gate earlier?" Ice Glaze asked Lie Lie.

"You're right!" Lie Lie nodded her head, "I've seen him before, too. He's very arrogant, and he brought a Thief on Stealth with him. He's insane! Sis Luo Luo, perhaps there's a Thief on Stealth peeping behind Young Master Han when you ran after him

earlier!”

“It’s possible,” Luo Luo nodded her head. She asked, “Did you see what he was doing over by the north gate?”

“He’s helping Miles along with a few other guys,” Lie Lie replied.

“You’re saying Young Master Han and his few companions were there?” Luo Luo’s eyes widened.

“No! I asked someone among them. He said he’s a friend of Miles. Isn’t that right, Xiao Bing?” Lie Lie asked Ice Glaze for confirmation.

Ice Glaze nodded her head, “It’s an Archer that said that.”

“Archer? Royal God Call?” Luo Luo asked.

“That’s the one!” Lie Lie and Ice Glaze exclaimed together, “Luo Luo, how did you know?”

“I briefly met someone with that IGN over at the tavern near the city gate. He’s someone Miles knows. He left with Miles, afterward,” Luo Luo explained.

“Royal God Call? Isn’t he supposed to be a Mage?” July asked in bafflement, asking, “Does his name have the same pronunciation?”

“Yes. Sis July, do you know someone who goes by that name?” Lie Lie and Ice Glaze asked.

“There’s a famous Mage in the online gaming community called Royal God Call,” July shared, “He’s considered as a top-class expert.”

“Could that Close Combat Mage be Royal God Call?” Lie Lie was visibly excited.

July and Luo Luo glanced at each other before replying in unison, “Impossible!”

“Why? Isn’t he an expert Mage?” Lie Lie was perplexed.

“Xiao Bing, did you see that name before on the experience

leaderboard for Mage?” Luo Luo asked Ice Glaze.

“I don’t think so...” Ice Glaze replied.

“That’s not odd. His IGN got taken away by that Archer, right? Naturally, he had to change ID!” Lie Lie said.

“That’s not possible,” July was certain.

“Why?” Lie Lie did not understand.

July and Luo Luo looked at each other once more before finally saying, “Because rumor has it that that guy’s a total perv. He’ll hit on any female players as long as he can lay his eyes on them. His most famous line is: ‘Big sis, want lil bro here to grind with you?’ Do you think that Close Combat Mage is that sort of guy?”

Lie Lie shook her head frantically.

“That Archer Royal God Call, did he call you guys big sis when you met him?” July asked Luo Luo and the other two ladies.

“Nope,” the three answered.

“But... He’s indeed somewhat like that...” Ice Glaze offered, adding, “He came over on his accord to introduce himself, and he proceeded to stick around me and Lie Lie. He even tried to chat us up.”

Luo Luo nodded her head, “Now that we’re in a full-immersion environment, he can’t possibly chase after women and call them big sis, since that won’t be cute at all!”

“By the looks of things, that Royal God Call person is indeed the same one, except he changed his job class this time,” July said.

“That sounds about right,” Luo Luo nodded her head in agreement.

“Since they’re all friends of Miles, why would he need to employ them?” July said.

“That’s how it is with fighting! Since he didn’t have enough men

after calling his friends, of course he'd hire some helpers. That still makes sense," Luo Luo justified, believing what she said yet also withholding her suspicions.

"Do these men know one another?" July continued to ask Lie Lie.

Lie Lie only scratched her head in ignorance, and it was Ice Glaze who said, "Seems like it. I remember there's a Warrior that came over and called Royal God Call by his name. That probably means they're acquainted, right?"

"How many were there?" Luo Luo asked.

"Four. The Archer is Royal God Call, that Priest, and there's also a Warrior and a Knight," Ice Glaze recalled.

"If we include that Close Combat Mage and that Thief, there are exactly six people!" Luo Luo said, adding, "And Young Master's Elite mercenary group is also made up of six people!"

"So you're saying they're members of Young Master's Elite?" July asked. As Luo Luo nodded her head in confirmation, July asked further, "So that means Miles actually knows the members of that group. Why did he say he didn't?"

"If they're friends, Miles is probably helping them hide their identity... Or perhaps, Miles is also a member of the mercenary group. If that's the case, then Miles is definitely that Close Combat Mage!" Luo Luo could barely contain her excitement.

"Anything but that, please!" Lie Lie began to cry, saying, "With how he is giving me the cold shoulder right now—"

"Don't be hasty. This is just a guess; we still need to confirm it!" Luo Luo consoled Lie Lie. Lie Lie had always been idolizing the Close Combat Mage.

"If we want to confirm this, it depends entirely on that Royal God Call person," July said.

"That person. There shan't be problems if we show ourselves to

him, right?” Luo Luo wavered.

“Who’s willing to get close to that perverted guy?” July asked the floor.

None of the ladies volunteered.

“According to what I know, he’s not a big—” Just as Luo Luo began to say this, the other three promptly nominated her by saying: “Then, you go!”

“Oh, that’s right! That new member Will-low seems to know him,” Luo Luo quickly tried to nominate another lady.

“No. The fewer people who know about this, the better. They’ve painstakingly hidden their identity all this time. Just our inquiry is already unwanted; let’s not increase the number of people in the know,” July rejected.

“Looks like we can only draw lots for this,” Luo Luo swept her gaze around.

July also gazed around before finally sighing, “Let’s just draw among the three of us. Even if Xiao Bing draws it by chance, I’m afraid she won’t be able to ask anything.”

Ice Glaze blushed scarlet.

Just as they were about to pick out the paper slips, July suddenly happily said, “Wait a minute.”

“What?”

“I have two friends who found out that I’m a member of Amethyst Rebirth. They hope for me to introduce you ladies to them’,” July read out, “Miles sent this message.”

“Without even asking, I’m sure one of the two friends he mentioned is that Royal God Call,” Luo Luo was ecstatic.

“Looks like they’ve sent themselves to us,” July laughed.

“Call them over; we must grill them and make clear of everything

this time!” Luo Luo said.

“What if Miles is indeed the Close Combat Mage, what will I do?!” Lie Lie started to cry once more.

“You’ll have no chance at all, then,” Luo Luo lowered her head and chuckled.

Chapter 114 - Controlled Exposure

When Gu Fei got July's "Alright, come over!" reply, he was immediately at a loss.

Thinking back to the attitude that the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies had shown him the first time they met and Luo Luo's earlier comment about the way the ladies viewed him differently from the other male players, Gu Fei thought for sure that July would reject his request. Right now, not only did July not reject his request, she also readily agreed to it.

Did she wrongly assume that I'm introducing another lady to the guild? Gu Fei realized the possibility of that, so he quickly sent her another message to clarify, "They're men!"

Unexpectedly, July replied much faster than before, "That's fine. We're still at Ray's Bar!"

She must be drunk, Gu Fei thought to himself. At the same time, he realized that he could shirk taking responsibility for this issue. Since the other party had no issue with meeting the two men, then he was merely someone who introduced two groups of friends to each other, so it was not like he was in the wrong for bringing men to meet those from Amethyst Rebirth.

With that, Gu Fei got up and looked at War Without Wounds and Royal God Call that had the look of expectation written all over their faces, "Let's go!"

"Where to?" they asked.

"To the room next door for you guys to meet the ladies!" Gu Fei answered.

"Oh, yes!" both exclaimed in elation. They only wanted to get their names; they did not expect to have their first intimate contact with the ladies this soon, instead.

"You sure do things efficiently, Miles. I really admire that about

you,” War Without Wounds beamed, as if he had not just called Gu Fei a ‘goody-goody’ a short while ago.

“Thanks,” Gu Fei bitterly laugh as he brought the two into the next room.

“Wishing to meet and actually meeting; to think we’re just several steps away from one another!” Royal God Call sighed as he tried to sound sophisticated. Gu Fei stopped himself from sending a roundhouse kick on Royal God Call’s mouth.

Gu Fei lifted the curtain and beckoned the two inside the room. After exchanging introductions between the two parties, the atmosphere became really harmonious within the room. Gu Fei looked at the four ladies and saw that their eyes were clear, not looking the least bit drunk. He really could not make sense of this.

Royal God Call began hitting on the ladies. He pointed at Luo Luo first and said, “I’ve met you before!” He then addressed Ice Glaze and Lie Lie next, “I’ve also met you two before, right?”

The three ladies smiled and nodded their heads. War Without Wounds coughed loudly when he saw Royal God Call steal the first move, taking up three out of the four ladies.

Meanwhile, Gu Fei’s heart thumped at this moment. Royal God Call’s mention of ‘meeting before’ made him realize something: Lie Lie and Ice Glaze saw Young Master Han and the other three men deal with Nightmare of Death by the north gate’s mailbox earlier. Gu Fei now knew why these ladies were more than willing to agree to his request. It was because of that earlier encounter! Just as he was about to warn the two men about this via a message, July unexpectedly cut to the chase, “Are you two from Young Master’s Elite mercenary group?”

I knew it! Gu Fei called out inside him. He failed to remind the two in time, as Royal God Call very quickly replied, “I can tell you girls, but you gotta keep it a secret!”

F*ck! Isn't that as good as admitting to it? Gu Fei felt depressed. July solemnly promised, "Don't worry; you guys were such a big help back then. We're only curious, so we're asking. I assure you we won't tell it to anyone else."

As Royal God Call heard this, he nodded his head with equal severity, "We're indeed part of Young Master's Elite."

At this moment, the four no longer looked at Gu Fei the same way as before. July's eyes told Gu Fei: "How's that? Can't lie your way out of this now, right?" With this reveal, she recalled Gu Fei's antics from before and naturally realized that those were done to hide the truth.

Of course, Gu Fei was feeling very uncomfortable right now. Just as he was about to say something to take control of the situation, Royal God Call very quickly added, "We both are, but Miles isn't."

"Ah?!" everyone expressed in shock.

Royal God Call displayed a look of disdain on his face, "He wants to join Young Master's Elite, but he has yet to pass the test. You guys should know how bullishly strong our Mage is. Miles just couldn't match up."

"So who's that Mage, then?" July asked carefully.

Royal God Call shook his head, "We can tell you about everyone but the Mage. He's got a lot of enemies, so telling anyone his name will only invite trouble. Sorry about that," Royal God Call's gaze showed his decisiveness on this matter.

Gu Fei was thoroughly shocked by this. He never thought that Royal God Call would actually help him at such a critical moment. The four ladies immediately looked despondent. Just as Gu Fei had thought, the ladies were more interested in him, the Close Combat Mage, than anyone else in the mercenary group.

"So who are the others?" Luo Luo asked.

"There's Sword Demon, Brother Assist, and Young Master Han.

You girls probably haven't heard the 'Young Master Han' IGN before; how about 'Drinking Addict'?" Royal God Call asked.

"Ah!" July and Luo Luo exclaimed.

"So these are the members that made up Young Master's Elite. They indeed live up to their names," July sighed deeply.

"Sis July?" Ice Glaze was not an experienced gamer, so she was somewhat puzzled by all this.

"The five IGNs in their mercenary group are players that left quite the mark in the online gaming world. It's truly hard to believe that they've actually banded together. Calling them 'elite' is an understatement; they should be considered as one-in-ten-thousand experts of the online gaming community," July explained emphatically.

"You praise us too much," Royal God Call and War Without Wounds could barely conceal their grins.

In actual fact, they barely heard such flattering words after joining Young Master's Elite mercenary group, being side by side with equal experts and all. The even worse fact was that the most prominent and powerful member in the six-man group was actually a nobody like Gu Fei. This had made the five forget their identities as first-rate experts. Sometimes, experts like them needed their ego to be massaged with praises and applauses to at least build up their self-confidence.

"Alright, you ladies have fun chatting with this gaming elite pair. I'll take my leave now," Gu Fei said placidly.

"Go ahead. Grind well and fight for your chance to join our group," Royal God Call encouraged.

War Without Wounds nodded his head, "Level doesn't mean everything, especially in games like Parallel World that are difficult to level up. We can only depend on luck for equipment, but skill must be gruelingly trained using our own efforts."

“That’s true,” the girls cheered.

“You beasts,” Gu Fei muttered to himself. Leaving the four ladies and two men, he headed to the room next door. Young Master Han and Brother Assist were still inside!

“What’s the matter? How many ladies did you introduce those two?” the two asked, chuckling.

“Four,” Gu Fei answered.

Young Master Han shook his head and sighed, “Our identities are about to be exposed, then.”

“We’re already exposed,” Gu Fei corrected.

“And your identity is still kept in the dark, right?” Young Master Han smirked.

“How did you know?” Gu Fei asked, surprised.

Young Master Han smiled, “Those two are there to chase skirts, so why would they willingly let you steal their thunder? If they admitted that you’re a member of Young Master’s Elite, those ladies would know that you’re Fugitive 27149. I’ve already said before that you’re the only one the ladies are truly interested in. Rest assured; those two won’t reveal your identity even if it means dying. Even if you go back there and shout that you’re actually Fugitive 27149, they’ll still think of ways to convince the ladies that you’re not.”

“D*mn!” Gu Fei was dumbfounded. He hated himself for not having the brains to realize the real intention of that rascal Royal God Call. He thought that Royal God Call was doing his utmost to protect his identity, only to find out now that his action was for something deplorable.

“Ha ha ha! Putting down the people around him to elevate his status—that’s a common skirt-chasing technique in online games. Since you’re gone, I’m 80% sure that those two have turned to mocking each other now. Just wait and watch!” Brother Assist

remarked.

Gu Fei was amazed. Just as Brother Assist had predicted, Royal God Call and War Without Wounds began to ridicule each other ever since that day. Their verbal mockery would start every time they met, spreading to the mercenary channel for all to see. As for the private conversation between the two, that was filled with even more insults that were beyond counting.

Whenever the rest of the group got tired of grinding every day, they would simply pull out the mercenary channel and read the chat logs of both verbally beating down each other to entertain themselves. Gu Fei did not care about all this, but Brother Assist addressed this matter to him seriously, “You can’t see it like that. These two are experts; their verbal fights ain’t just talk. An example is yesterday’s passage when they exchanged disdainful remarks with each other. It’s like a match between a Mage and a Warrior on paper, which contained plenty of techniques used by Mages and Warriors. Remember when War Without Wounds said something about using the network delay to turn five hits into six? Even I’ve never heard of that before.”

Besides this, the two began to loiter around the street that Amethyst Rebirth’s guild house was situated. Its distance from Ray’s Bar was relatively close. Whenever the other four of Young Master’s Elite mercenary group left the bar after resting there, they would countless times see Royal God Call and War Without Wounds walking up and down the street while giving each other verbal lashing. After asking a bit, they found out that the two had intended to create a ‘coincidental meet-up’ scenario with the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies on that lane.

The two did not wish to be outdone by the other in their skirt-chasing; thus, they spent copious amounts of time doing such inane things, causing their rankings on the experience leaderboard to gradually drop with each passing day. War Without Wounds was no longer the number one on the Warrior leaderboard, while

Royal God Call was already outside the top 20 spots on the Archer leaderboard.

“Lust is the heart of troubles!” the other four could not help but sigh.

Gu Fei spent these few days rather monotonously. He had been hoping that someone would come to pick a fight with him, yet his days passed by in such peace that he bristled with anger.

He had originally thought that his accumulated 12 PK points would act as a tantalizing bait, yet not one soul came to find him at all. Ever since the game’s first day of open beta, the players began to have a good understanding of the various quests and mission designs in Parallel World. The purpose of ‘Bounty Mission’ was more or less to erase PK value. Therefore, it was not profitable for players to depend on this sort of missions to earn money or gain levels. This was because the risks involved for such missions were high while the rewards were average at best; it was truly a bad trade-off. As for erasing PK value, most players only had 1 or 2 PK points. Thus, there was no need to hunt someone with a PK value of 12 points like Gu Fei.

Losing 1 PK point every two hours, Gu Fei’s 12 PK points were cleared off just like that, which caused him to feel very sad, as he had just lost some great opportunities to engage in PvP.

Besides that, Nightmare of Death and gang did not actually look for him after what had happened. Gu Fei remembered how the gang members had shown interest in his Moonlit Nightfalls, yet they did not even make a move on it. This was something Gu Fei could not fathom.

As such days passed by one by one, Gu Fei found it difficult to tolerate the monotony after getting addicted to PvP. He would even take a stroll down the streets in his hopes to bump into a chance for him to become belligerent. Unfortunately for him, Yunduan City’s atmosphere was one of peace; Gu Fei even

entertained the thought of returning to Yueye City.

At the same time, just as what Brother Assist had said before, the game's official release was about to happen.

Chapter 115 - Windchaser's Boots

On the first day of Parallel World's official release, Gu Fei received quite a huge fright when he got online and saw the people all around him pack like canned sardines. It happened to be nighttime in-game when he logged in, so the balls of fire floating everywhere in the Mage Academy and lighting up the whole place appeared somewhat sinister to him. In addition to this, the sight of countless men, women, elderly, and children shouting, "Shoot! Shoot! Shoot!" to their hearts' content created a very incongruous and cringe-worthy atmosphere in the entire academy.

Apparently, a number of Mages that day were so alarmed by the sudden change in Parallel World that they acted unlike their usual selves. Gu Fei suspected that Fireball must have had it the worst out of all these people as he had not gotten online for four days straight after that day when the game was officially released. When he finally logged in, Fireball seemed to still be out of it when Gu Fei chatted him up; obviously, his thoughts were still in turmoil.

There were too many people. This was what everyone thought when the VR game's official release happened. The sudden population explosion of players had brought about huge changes to the game's landscapes as well. For instance, Peddlers' Street 1, Peddlers' Street 2, Peddlers' Street 3, and so on and so forth came to be. Even Yunduan City's central plaza became a sprawling bazaar. Even the cost of beginner equipment experienced a spike during this period of time, taking about two weeks before it finally settled.

Some business-minded players that had received information about the official release before the others managed to make a tidy profit from this wave of rising prices of the beginner equipment. Young Master Han and Brother Assist were two such individuals. Sword Demon madly grinded levels after losing two levels worth of

experience points before. However, he apparently had a stake in Young Master Han's business, so he made quite a sum as well.

However, these men were clearly not professional gamers. Professional gamers would try to exchange the in-game coins they earned to real-world currency; in contrast, these men actually squandered all their newly earned gold coins haphazardly; Young Master Han could be seen at Ray's Bar drunk like a skunk for several days, and Sword Demon's equipment experienced an extensive overhaul. As for Brother Assist, it was unknown where he spent his gold coins on.

War Without Wounds and Royal God Call seemed to have become unofficial members of Amethyst Rebirth at this point. They felt resentful toward Gu Fei for being able to join the all-female guild while they could not. Eventually, these two men's resentment died down upon considering the fact that they had actually been spending more time with the ladies – as they grinded their levels together – compared to the actual member, Gu Fei. Amethyst Rebirth gained quite a number of ladies ever since the game's official release, giving these two legendary skirt-chasers much stuff to busy themselves with. Every day, they would lead a bevy of beauties outside the city to grind levels. In some players' eyes, this was a glorious task.

As for the most prominent and glorious in-game, open beta player, Gu Fei, he was actually the one who had felt the most depressed before the start of this entire event. Gu Fei had taken to loitering around the Bounty Mission Assignment Hall as it was the one place he could legally acquire PvP subjects. Unfortunately for him, Yunduan City's peaceful atmosphere was absolutely detrimental to his bounty hunting business. The Wanted Players list only had very few targets at any given time, which he could easily handle in no time at all. Just as Gu Fei was feeling dispirited by all this, the official release happened and the great fanfare that ensued provided a wind of change for him.

An innumerable amount of players entered the game, so an innumerable amount of players needed to grind levels as well. The disadvantages of the huge amount of experience points needed before and after level 30 in Parallel World became evident at this point.

Back then, Sword Demon could grind to level 24 in a day. Even if the current players did not have his luck and perseverance, reaching level 30 was not a tall task. In just a few days, a majority of these players' levels managed to get within the range of level 25 to 30, which resulted in the grinding maps near Yunduan City to increase abruptly in player usage by several folds.

The players at Yunxiao Farm, which was already a treacherous place to begin with, could no longer grind on the monsters by slyly accusing their competitors of kill-stealing like before. These days, players there openly killed one another with many of them constantly kill-stealing monsters. All sorts of players could be seen over at Yunxiao Farm, such as players alone, players in a group, and gangs in alliance with other gangs. Yunxiao Farm momentarily transformed into Yunxiao Cemetery, with the sorrowful cries that incessantly echoed all across the map and blood that painted the fields red.

The Bounty Mission Assignment Hall's Wanted Players list naturally began to fill up, leaving Gu Fei totally elated that his smile would just not come off. Every day, after grinding his level a bit, he would go to the hall and wait for the appearance of these missions in his remaining time online.

His fellow mercenary group members felt that Gu Fei busying himself with this matter was not good; after all, the efficiency of grinding through 'Bounty Mission' was simply too low. The efficiency would be high if the targets of the various missions stood right outside the entrance of the Assignment Hall, waiting for the players to kill them. However, something like that happening was simply impossible. Thus, a large amount of time doing these

missions would be spent rushing back and forth to a target's location and the hall. In addition, time would be spent on pinpointing the target's exact position. However, Gu Fei did not care about all that, as his purpose for doing the missions was not to grind levels. Thus, he continued to find happiness in doing such activity without feeling the least bit bored.

Just as the rest of the mercenary group had expected, Gu Fei's number one position on the experience leaderboard for Mages due to that one chain quest severely plummeted. It was far worse than Royal God Call and War Without Wounds that had once spent more time flirting than grinding.

However, the situation changed two weeks after the official release. Gu Fei's leveling speed suddenly seemed to have been revitalized to his previous level of efficiency. They all thought that Gu Fei had become enlightened. When they mentioned this at their gathering, Gu Fei showed them an item instead.

Windchaser's Emblem.

This emblem had two uses. First, it allowed the refresh rate of the target's coordinates for the 'Bounty Mission' to be updated every minute instead of the usual five minutes; second, it would teleport its user back to the Assignment Hall once he or she completed the 'Bounty Mission'.

"Where did you get this?" all the present experts asked in astonishment. This was a piece of accessory no one had seen on the current market yet. In fact, none of the current players was aware that there was an item inside Parallel Word with a teleportation skill.

"I got it when I went to claim my reward after completing a mission. The system stated that it will be awarded to a player who has accomplished 'Bounty Mission' for a hundredth time," Gu Fei explained.

Sighing in admiration, they were no longer as envious as before.

Clearly, this thing would only be useful for ‘Bounty Mission’. Besides Gu Fei, who would be mad enough to do ‘Bounty Mission’ countless times? Anyway, it was thanks to this item that Gu Fei could see a substantial increase in his speed of gaining experience points.

However, their eyeballs nearly popped out when Gu Fei pulled out another item.

Windchaser’s Boots: movement +60; boosts movement speed by 35%.

“A pair of boots with double traits!” everyone gasped loudly.

A character had a maximum movement speed when it was first created in Parallel World. Mages, for example, would have their speed capped at 100 points. Afterward, the different job classes’ growth rate in the Agility stat would result in different increases in movement speed as players added points to Agility differently. The growth rate for a Mage’s movement speed, based off the Agility stat, was 1:1. Meaning, adding a point to Agility would increase movement speed proportionately.

Thus, boots in Parallel World were only useful for one thing – boosting movement speed – and usually only had one trait. A trait like ‘movement +60’ would be chosen by characters who did not add much points to Agility stat; while the other trait that increased movement speed by a given percentage would mostly be selected by job classes that focused on Agility as part of their build.

Take Gu Fei as an example; his full-Agility build plus the Agility points he gained innately every time he leveled up would afford him 180 points to Agility by the time he was at level 30. If the 100 innate points and 180 allocated points of his Agility were added together, his resulting speed would be 280 points. If he were to equip a pair of boots that boosted ‘movement speed by 35%’ at this point in time, his movement speed would increase by another 98 points, which would evidently be better than a pair of boots that

had ‘movement +60’ trait on it.

Now, consider a Mage who did not blindly add points to Agility; his or her movement speed would only be at 130 points upon reaching level 30. This meant that this pair of boots that boosted movement speed by 35% would only increase his or her Agility by 45 points, making a pair of boots with ‘movement +60’ trait a better choice for him or her.

The Windchaser’s Boots with Gu Fei had a rather average ‘movement +60’ trait and an excellent ‘boost movement speed by 35%’ trait in comparison to the traits of other boots currently available in-game. Still, the two traits appearing on a pair of boots together, none of the experts seated could claim to have ever seen another pair that was as OP as Gu Fei’s.

“Where did you get this?!” they all clamored. The mission-sending ability of Windchaser’s Emblem had given them a shock, but the accessory was useless besides that feature. This pair of shoes, however, was another matter, especially to Sword Demon and Royal God Call.

Gu Fei smiled, “I also got this from that last ‘Bounty Mission’ I completed. Besides the emblem, I was awarded with this pair of boots, too. Apparently, it’s awarded to a player who consecutively completes the ‘Bounty Mission’ for one hundred times.”

“Consecutively completing ‘Bounty Mission’ for one hundred times!” everyone murmured. This criterion was evidently far harsher than merely completing the ‘Bounty Mission’ a hundred times. There were many conditions that could cause ‘Bounty Mission’ to fail; getting killed by a target was naturally the most humiliating way to fail it. Another player capturing a target first, a target’s PK value duration ending and getting erased, or a target suddenly having a change of heart and turning himself or herself in were treated by the game’s system as a player failing the ‘Bounty Mission’.

However, with such a prize like the Windchaser's Boots right before their eyes, it was truly difficult for them to not feel moved. Royal God Call was obviously the one who fell in love with the pair of boots the most, as he hesitated for a while before finally saying, "Miles, lend me your Windchaser's Emblem. I want to get this pair of boots, too."

Gu Fei decisively passed Royal God Call the emblem without a second thought: "Take it. I happen to be preparing to grind my level. I heard players can get Job Class Advancement when they reach level 40."

One month had passed since the official release of Parallel World; players like Young Master Han and the rest who were ahead of the pack had already broken through the level 40 threshold for quite some time. A large number of players were currently assaulting the level 40 ceiling as well. Gu Fei running around to play with the 'Bounty Mission' with wild abandon had caused his glorious number one spot on the experience leaderboard to sharply decline. It was only after obtaining the Windchaser's Emblem that boosted his efficiency that he somehow managed to preserve his position. After all, Gu Fei's ability to grind on monsters twenty levels above his level was not something any other players had. His efficiency was far greater than anyone else even if he just spent two hours grinding every day. If Gu Fei did not hold this advantage, his position would surely be at a middling level in the game by now, especially since he had focused solely on bounty hunting.

"Oh, yes. Miles, what are you thinking of advancing to? Water or Lightning?" Royal God Call asked.

Gu Fei was stunned, "Must I remain as a Mage? Can't I change to a Brawler, instead?" Level 40 Mages had the choice of advancing to a Water Mage or a Lightning Mage, yet Gu Fei thought that the 'Job Class Advancement' term referred to a chance to change his job class entirely. Therefore, he only researched the Job Class Advancement for Fighters: Brawler or Qigong Master.

Brother Assist patted his back, “You can only choose the Job Class Advancement of your original job class; it’s not a chance to change a job class itself as you thought.”

“So that’s how it is! I’ll have to research further, then,” Gu Fei said despondently, asking, “Have you guys advanced yet?”

Out of the six members of the mercenary group, five had already reached level 40 besides Gu Fei who was at level 39. Even Sword Demon who had previously lost two levels’ worth of experience points already reached level 40 last night.

“Nope, we’re still researching,” Brother Assist answered.

Chapter 116 - Substitute for Royal

At level 40, the seven main job classes would come to a divergence, where each job class would branch out into two separate pathways. Besides providing a different set of skills and spells, these two pathways would also revamp the players' stat growth rate that was established when they first started the game. Hence, when players went for Job Class Advancement, the system would offer them a chance to reallocate the stat points that they had previously distributed.

A sizable amount of players were thumping their chests and stamping their feet in frustration when this rule was announced. Had they known that such a chance to reallocate their stats would be offered eventually, they would not have been stingy in distributing points across the different stats all this time. Quite a lot of players still had half of their points saved up, hoping to add them to the most appropriate stats after getting a good grasp of their job classes. These 'experts', who were boasting about their farsightedness, could only silently suffer this loss upon the announcement of this particular rule. After all, not allocating more than half the points that they were given when they had their level ups had already made their past grinding progress arduous.

It was pointless to complain now with the reveal of this new rule. With the thought of 'letting bygones be bygones', all started to focus their energy on researching the two different pathways of their respective job classes instead.

Warriors would branch out into Guardians and Berserkers. The former prioritized defensive capabilities, granting a more prominent hardness than before, while the latter focused on having greater offense, becoming a character that was a deadly force to be reckoned with.

Thieves would advance to become either Assassins or Rogues. Assassins were better suited to inflicting a greater deal of damage,

while Rogues were a superior version of the traditional style of a sneaky Thief.

Priests and Knights were divided into two affinities: Light and Dark. It was stated that the job classes with affinity toward the Light side would continue to possess strong capabilities in assisting and supporting teammates. Those belonging to the Dark side, meanwhile, would acquire cursing-type skills or spells.

For Fighters, their choice would either be a Brawler or Qigong Master. The former would continue to fight with bare fists; as for the latter, it was stated that with their vast internal force, Qigong Masters would acquire AOE skills on par with Mages.

Sharpshooter and Hunter were the Job Class Advancement choices available to Archers. The ability of Archers to ambush from afar remained in these two job classes, with Sharpshooters continuing to develop the forte of long-range attacks and Hunters attaining the ability to set up traps.

Lastly, there was the Mage job class where the difference in advancement lay in becoming either a Water Mage or a Lightning Mage. Judging from the official list of spells that was posted, Mages seemed to have the most distinctive differences after assaulting the Job Class Advancement. Water Mages had water-and ice-based spells that could inflict the Freezing effect; Lightning Mages had lightning-and electricity-based spells that could produce the Shock effect. Besides Mage, no other job classes appeared to have two advancement choices so different from each other. There was of course an obvious reasoning to this: No matter which pathway the Mages chose to advance forward, their job class was the only one that could rely on the previous method of focusing on an Intelligence-based build.

Besides the Fighter job class, all six members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group had chosen a different job class out of the seven main ones. All of them currently qualified for Job Class Advancement except for Gu Fei. Since they were all gaming

experts, they had yet to advance to a specific job class, and were still carefully observing and comparing the pros and cons of the two Job Class Advancement choices of their respective job classes. As for whether their efforts would be futile in the end like what had happened with their previously saved up leveling stat points, only the heavens would have the answer to that.

Royal God Call was in high spirits and raring to go once he received the Windchaser's Emblem. Movement speed was crucial to Archers. In fact, their most common style of attacking, 'kiting', required the Archers to have sufficient movement speed to safeguard their lives. When it came to choosing equipment for any Archers, their footwear took priority than their weapon. Given how superb a pair of Windchaser's Boots was and that the boots were a guaranteed reward upon completing one hundred consecutive 'Bounty Mission', Royal God Call clenched his teeth and resolved to get a pair for himself as well.

"How strange," Brother Assist wondered, saying, "Your emblem and boots came from the same system that manages the 'Bounty Mission'... Why don't they belong in the same equipment set since they share similar sounding names?"

Green-tier equipment came in different pieces that formed a full set, and they were displayed with green font; once all the different pieces were gathered together, the hidden traits within them would be activated. The two new pieces of equipment of Gu Fei were obviously not green tier and were just gold tier, not even reaching the rank of purple tier.

Gu Fei was of course clueless about this matter. As for Royal God Call, he cared less about it, as all he wanted was a pair of Windchaser's Boots for himself. After equipping Windchaser's Emblem, he said to Gu Fei, "Alright, I am off to plough through the 'Bounty Mission'. I'll leave the level grinding over there to you."

"Wait, what? What's this about 'level grinding over there'?" Gu Fei stopped him from leaving.

“I’ve been taking the beauties of your guild for level grinding every single day! I need to go plough through the ‘Bounty Mission’ now, and it just so happens that you need to level up fast, so you should go there in my stead! I’ve already told them to meet over at the tavern entrance by the east gate at 7:15 PM; you probably know them all, anyway. Alright, I’m off. Don’t forget about it!” Royal God Call disappeared in a flash after saying this.

“Ah, it’s 7 PM already? I gotta go, too!” War Without Wounds hurriedly got up as he looked at the time, “My speed is slower, so I have to leave early,” he mumbled while getting up.

“It’s time for me to do a group grinding with others, too. I’ll walk with you!” Brother Assist left with War Without Wounds.

Only three remained out of the six in the blink of an eye. Gu Fei looked around the room and at the remaining two that were closest with each other, Sword Demon and Young Master Han. “What about you guys? It’s probably time for you two to join some other groups for level grinding as well, right? Why don’t you guys take my place and go do whatever over there?” Gu Fei always trained by himself, and he currently felt pressured by the task Royal God Call had handed over to him.

“I’ve always been grinding on my own,” Sword Demon answered.

“I never grind at this time of the day,” Young Master Han replied while drinking his liquor, adding, “There’re too many people.” The time after dinner until the time before bed was always the peak hour in online games.

Gu Fei sighed. It looked like he had no choice but to participate in this party grinding as there were no other people he could count on at the moment. Gu Fei stood up and equipped the most stylish robe, Midnight Spirit Robe. Strapping Moonlit Nightfalls on his back, he then left with his hands inside his robe pockets.

To think this is actually a Mage! Young Master Han thought to

himself, as he watched the departing Gu Fei from behind.

Now that Parallel World had been progressing and going steady for more than a month, a black mage robe was no longer considered unique. Where top-grade weapons emitted certain luster, top-grade clothing did not have this particular effect, making it difficult for the average players to determine the quality of the garment through their naked eyes alone. As for Moonlit Nightfalls with its purplish luster, Gu Fei had been carrying it so visibly for all to see on purpose. Life did not always go as expected, however. Those top-grade equipment looting thugs and robbers were nowhere to be found, and not even one of them made an attempt to rob Gu Fei even now.

As he drew nearer the city's east gate, Gu Fei could already see a group of ladies gathered outside the tavern close to the gate from afar. He glanced at the time: 7:10 PM. He was five minutes early of the appointed time. Legends had it that women were unpunctual creatures, but that did not seem to be the case in-game!

He did a head count as he walked closer. There were nine people, and he recognized two: Ice Glaze and Luo Luo. There were three faces that seemed familiar, and four that he had never seen before.

Ever since the game's official release, Amethyst Rebirth had been rapidly growing. Their initial modus operandi of recruiting only female players was unchanged, and Gu Fei remained as their sole male member as they expanded into a guild with fifty-seven members.

Guild Leader July seemed to have gotten the notion that Gu Fei did not mingle well with the rest of them. She would usually notify him about the regular guild activities, such as forming parties for grinding levels or doing missions together, while emphasizing that it was up to him to join them or not. Gu Fei, in return, would always reply: "I'm used to grinding alone." At some point in time, July had stopped notifying him.

He would occasionally bump into some female guildmates on the streets. However, the only thing he could recall for the vast majority of them was their faces, not even able to address them by their names. Thus, he did not dare to greet the familiar looking ones on the streets for fear of mistaking the wrong people. A month had passed like this, with Gu Fei and those of Amethyst Rebirth being akin to parallel lines that never met. He was curious as to how much longer July could endure having such a member who existed only in name.

Thanks to Royal God Call's request today, Gu Fei would finally cross paths with those of Amethyst Rebirth after such a 'long' time.

As he approached the nine ladies, Luo Luo and Ice Glaze just happened to have their backs facing against him. The other four did not recognize Gu Fei; there were three more that shared a mindset with him, so they did not dare arbitrarily greet this familiar looking guy for fear of getting the wrong person.

"Ahem!" Gu Fei cleared his throat lightly behind Luo Luo.

Turning around and seeing Gu Fei, she revealed a bright smile, "My. To what do we owe the pleasure of your company?"

Gu Fei smiled sheepishly, "Long time no see." He had not run across Luo Luo for more than a month now, and that kind of duration was enough to turn a pair of close friends into strangers in online games.

Luo Luo pulled him to face everyone, "Allow me to introduce him to you all... This man here is Thousand Miles Drunk!"

"Ah!" the four ladies that were strangers to Gu Fei had a surprised look on their faces. All these new members of Amethyst Rebirth had been wondering about the remarkability of the only male player in their all-female guild. If they were to speculate using common sense, this person was either in an out-of-the-ordinary relationship with a core member in the guild or a man in

body but a woman in heart.

Upon further inquiries, these two speculative gossips were quickly debunked. Furthermore, even those who were acquainted with Gu Fei, like July and Luo Luo, actually knew little about him. On the contrary, it was the two external helpers of Amethyst Rebirth, War Without Wounds and Royal God Call, who seemed to be close friends of his.

A lot of the girls wanted to dig out more information about the guild's sole male member from those two people. Unfortunately... Those two were very attentive to the possible 'danger' in this regard, and their hearts would skip a beat whenever the ladies would inquire about Gu Fei. Thus, the ensuing description of Gu Fei that the two provided the girls was more or less in line with what anyone would expect from them.

However, the girls were no fools. They could naturally tell that the two men were spouting nonsense the more they said about the person in question, resulting in Gu Fei becoming more shrouded in mystery to the ladies.

The mysterious person had just appeared before them. Naturally, the four newcomers were very thrilled; all that was missing from this 'touching' meeting was them asking for Gu Fei's autographs.

"Just what kind of gossips can be found on him? We must unravel them all!" was what the four of them resolved silently. This was essentially the nature of most female players; they cared less about what someone was capable of and more about what possible stories or entertainment a person could provide them.

"Since everyone is here already, shall we go?" Luo Luo asked as she sent Gu Fei an invitation to party with them.

As Gu Fei accepted the party request, Luo Luo smilingly said to him, "You are filling in for Royal, so you take the lead!" She passed the position of Captain to him after saying this. What followed soon after was a series of system notifications that popped up to

inform everyone that the party had been disbanded.

“What’s going on?” All the ladies were at a loss.

“I have only 1 point to my Command value,” Gu Fei said offhandedly. In Parallel World, party, group, or team forming was not something that could be done arbitrarily. There was a stat called Command for players, which would affect the amount of people that an appointed Captain could lead or command. Five more players could be added to a party for every 1 point of Command value that a Captain had. Additional experience points for the Command stat could be earned when players took on the role of a Captain during level grinding or questing. Evidently, Gu Fei had never participated into this kind of activities before, so he could not even meet the requirement for their current ten-person party.

There was a sudden clamor among the ladies. A small party of ten people required only 2 points of Command value, yet Gu Fei did not even have that on him... It was simply mind-blowing. He’s indeed no ordinary person! the four newcomers thought to themselves, as they got all worked up.

“I’ll do the leading, then!” Luo Luo had no choice but to regroup the party and reclaim the leadership position.

The party headed in the direction of the grinding map, with Gu Fei taking the rear. The four newcomers gathered themselves together and whispered for a while before finally sending a representative over to Gu Fei’s side.

“Brother Miles~” she singsonged.

“Just call me Miles,” Gu Fei said as he broke in a cold sweat. The way he had just been addressed by the girl made him cringe inside. She was just a little girl, and it was precisely this fact that Gu Fei could not stand the way he had just been greeted. All things considered, he was still a teacher. For someone who looked like she was still a student to call a teacher ‘brother’... He was spitting

blood in his mind just by imagining the interaction once again.

“Okay, Miles~” the little girl singsonged once more minus the word ‘brother’.

“What is it?” Gu Fei asked her while throwing a glance at Luo Luo in front. Luo Luo happened to glance backward at this time. When she saw Gu Fei looking at her, she threw him a flirtatious smile as well as a message. Upon opening the message, Gu Fei saw that it read: “Little loli is really cute, right?”

“What are you talking about?!” Gu Fei asked, sweating profusely.

“You won’t mind if I ask you a few questions, right?” the little girl asked.

“Of course!” Gu Fei answered.

“When did you join Amethyst Rebirth?” the little girl questioned.

“Upon its establishment,” Gu Fei replied.

“Why did you join this all-female guild?”

“They lacked people back then, and I helped nominate this guild,” Gu Fei provided this answer.

“Why didn’t we see you at all before this?”

“Uhh... I’m used to being on my own,” Gu Fei gave a vague answer.

“Are you close with Guild Leader July?”

“Just so-so, I guess!” Gu Fei honestly admitted.

“Okay, thank you,” the little girl thanked him and went back to the little group of four.

Gu Fei was dumbfounded. Is there a special significance to those questions? Uncovering inside scoops through the bits and chunks of everyday occurrences, these kind of nosy mentality was obviously not something Gu Fei understood.

Gu Fei could feel cold wind breezing through him, bringing with

it a sense of danger brewing in the air. This sense of danger heightened when he saw how the four little girls huddled together and whispered among them, throwing him the occasional glances. I have no idea what they're plotting right now... Gotta find myself a scapegoat when worse comes to worst. Thinking things through, Gu Fei hastened his pace and made a beeline to the very front of the party. He absentmindedly started a conversation with Luo Luo when he arrived beside her, "Where are we going to grind levels?"

"Yunxia Valley," Luo Luo answered.

"Oh, I am familiar with that map," Gu Fei said, adding, "I level grinded there a month ago."

Luo Luo was momentarily stunned. A month ago was still the period where everyone was at level 30. Being able to grind over at Yunxia Valley at that time meant that the players possessed the capabilities to engage monsters ten levels beyond their own. A mere Mage that can actually solo grind monsters ten levels higher than his... Luo Luo deduced that Gu Fei was a formidable player, but she did not expect for him to have such incredible might. Only top-class players should possess capabilities like that, after all.

"Where do you level grind now, then?" Luo Luo asked out of curiosity.

"I'm not grinding that much anymore. I've been repeatedly doing 'Bounty Mission'," Gu Fei answered. He usually spent about two hours grinding on monsters. When compared to Sword Demon and the rest, Gu Fei did not consider his mere two hours to be a serious attempt at level grinding. And yet, if he had revealed where he had been grinding monsters on recently, it would have surely shocked Luo Luo to death. Yun Luo Summit, a level 60 grinding map, was definitely a place that the regular players had never been to before.

"'Bounty Mission'... Is it fast to level up with that?" Luo Luo asked, feeling weird about it.

"Nope. I'm just mindlessly playing around," Gu Fei replied.

Gu Fei's ranking on the overall experience leaderboard had taken a steep fall. This fall was actually not that obvious in Amethyst Rebirth, where he remained an upper rank player. With their fondness for chit-chatting and gossiping daily, the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies did not care much about the efficiency for level grinding. In fact, the time they took to actually level up was nothing impressive at all. Frankly speaking, Gu Fei had helped the ladies greatly by introducing them to the two gaming experts, War Without Wounds and Royal God Call. Had it not been for the two's personal instructions and supports, the current levels of the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies would have been a lot worse than they were today.

Looking to his side, Gu Fei saw Ice Glaze silently walking with lowered head alongside them. "Did Xiao Bing, my friend, here not recognize me anymore?" Ice Glaze did not greet Gu Fei even after she saw him earlier.

"Ah, that's not it!" Ice Glaze looked up in panic.

"Don't just focus on teasing the more shy ladies from our guild. Go and play with the little girls behind," Luo Luo said disdainfully, pulling Ice Glaze to her side.

"What are you saying?!" Gu Fei was close to fainting, as what Luo Luo had just said implied that he had evil intentions in him, "You're treating me like Royal!"

"Ah!" Luo Luo was taken aback for a second, finally saying, "That seems to be the case!"

"That beast," Gu Fei mocked.

Ice Glazed suddenly laughed, "That's what he said about you, too."

"Why did he describe me as such?" Gu Fei asked.

"It's nothing. It's just that whenever he mentions you, he would always replace your name with 'That beast!' or 'That livestock!'..."

Luo Luo laughingly shared.

“I’m gonna hack Royal to his death!” Gu Fei declared spitefully.

The ladies all burst into peals of laughter. “What a braggart!” everyone said while pointing at him.

Gu Fei was bewildered. He did not know why such a casual remark from him would generate such a response. Of course, there was something that he was not privy about. While he was always disdaining Royal God Call for his childishness, the latter was truly an exceptional gaming expert. Although the ladies were average at best when it came to gaming, they could tell that Royal God Call was very skillful after spending some time grinding levels with him. His famous IGN ‘Royal God Call’ was already proof of his ability in the online gaming community.

At present, Gu Fei’s level was beneath Royal God Call. With him holding the Mage job class, he was actually disadvantageous against Archers. So when Gu Fei uttered that he would “hack Royal to his death”, he was treated by the ladies as a braggart.

As the nonsensical chattering went on, they finally arrived at Yunxia Valley.

The current Yunxia Valley was no longer as bleak and desolate as when Gu Fei had been grinding in it before. Presently, it was a grinding map packed with the most players to the point that all its mountains and plains were filled with nothing but people. Gu Fei looked around as he strolled along with his party, seemingly unable to find an empty spot that could accommodate ten people for level grinding.

As the party was walking onward, some of the ladies’ footsteps came to a sudden halt. Looking ahead, Luo Luo began to furrow her brows. The others were also commenting among themselves, “It’s them again.”

“What’s wrong?” Gu Fei asked.

“This area originally belongs to Amethyst Rebirth. But that gang of people couldn’t find a grinding spot for themselves these few days and took a liking to our spot. So we’ve been having numerous duels with their party.”

“Duels?” Gu Fei asked, failing to understand what she meant.

Luo Luo looked at him with an even more confused gaze.

“What’s the duel for?” Gu Fei asked again.

“To claim a grinding spot for our own! Grinding maps are always overcrowded nowadays, and nobody can properly grind for levels when players are kill-stealing here and there. So everyone resorted to—”

“Oh, I get it,” Gu Fei indeed understood the matter now. The battle-crazed city of Yueye had the same rule as well. Since grinding maps could never handle so many players grinding altogether, it was inevitable for players to clash and claim their own grinding spots. Still, a large-scale group PvP would cause more harm than good, so an unwritten rule had been set: Different groups must only send out representatives to engage in a duel. Who would have thought that Yunduan City would become like this as well? This matter showed that people’s nature was the same no matter where they were.

“Let’s do it, then!” Gu Fei urged.

“But Royal isn’t here,” Luo Luo expressed solemnly, adding, “It’s always him that took on the duels before. Besides him, there are just me with no offensive abilities and Xiao Bing who is a Mage. The levels of the others are even lower.”

“I’ll go!” Gu Fei thumped his chest.

“But you’re a Mage, too!” Luo Luo protested in shock. From a conventional perspective, Mages were often weaker in a PvP. Despite Luo Luo thinking that Gu Fei was quite competent, she did not actually think that he would be stronger than a veteran expert

like Royal God Call. Gu Fei had almost died at the hands of Xiaoyu previously, after all. Something like that would never happen to Royal God Call.

Those people over at the claimed grinding spot noticed Gu Fei and the rest while they were still discussing the issue. There was no doubt that they were all familiar with one another, as that party of people started whistling and yelling, “Hey, beauties! You’re all here again.”

“How shameless you lot are! You all have lost numerous times already, yet you still keep on coming back here!” someone among the ladies yelled back.

“Perseverance! Such spirit is worth learning for all!” someone from the opposing side shouted, obviously trying to keep on acting shameless to the very end.

Gu Fei proceeded onward without even waiting for a reply from Luo Luo, “Who’s the one who will be doing the duel? Come out!”

Those from the opposing side were stumped when they saw Gu Fei, “Why is there a sudden change of person? Where’s that arrogant brat? Tell him to come out, instead!”

“He’s not here,” Gu Fei stated matter-of-factly.

The opposing gang of people had a sudden discussion in hushed tone. The fact that they still dared to come again after suffering several consecutive losses to Royal God Call meant that they had come prepared this time. In order to deal with Royal God Call, they specially found themselves a Thief expert, preparing to counter the Archer with an advantageous job class. They also managed to observe that all the ladies were not proficient and knowledgeable in PvP besides Royal God Call. Thus, they had never considered the possibility of them switching the Archer for another person.

And yet, the unthinkable happened. The player line-up of Amethyst Rebirth that had remained unchanged for days suddenly

changed out of nowhere. Royal God Call was absent today, and another guy had appeared instead.

“Appraise him!” The opposing gang had no intention of losing again.

“Mage!” They were all brimming with joy when the result of Appraisal was out. Despite there being question marks displayed on some of the Mage’s equipment, nobody actually minded this minor detail. A duel with a Mage was hardly a difficult task, after all.

“So who’s up for it?” Everyone on the opposing side began to bicker among themselves for the chance to go up against the Mage. Truthfully, this party of people had purposely been clashing with the Amethyst Rebirth’ members to claim the grinding spot. Once they claimed the grinding spot for their own, they would ‘generously’ invite the ladies to grind levels together. Although it might be a little cramped with two groups of people, the ladies would presumably not reject their offer since it was still better than no place to train at all. What came next would of course be getting to know the ladies sooner or later.

This was what this party of people had in mind at first. Unfortunately, they had never anticipated that the party of moderately strong ladies would include an Archer who was a tough nut to crack. Over the course of a few days, some of them had continuously lost to the Archer. Although they enlisted the help of a Thief today, they were still feeling a little uneasy inside. Today, seeing that the expert Archer was absent and a Mage had replaced him, everyone was eager to come out and show their prowess in front of the ladies.

“Oh, right.” Gu Fei turned his head back and asked Luo Luo, “This PvP is not a fight to the death, and we’ll stop once a certain HP threshold is crossed, right?”

Luo Luo nodded her head in affirmation, as she thought to

herself, Does that question have any merit? All have specifically come up with such a method to avoid having their levels dropped, so why would we be fighting to the death? She drew nearer to Gu Fei and said in a low tone, “Be careful. This PvP can be either a fair one or a dishonest one. Knowing which one it is by the time everything ends will no longer be useful to you.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll be careful,” Gu Fei reassured.

Luo Luo nodded her head in acknowledgement, “Just withdraw if things don’t look good. We’ll just find another grinding spot.”

Gu Fei went numb for a second before saying, “When I said I’ll be careful, I mean I’ll be careful not to kill them....”

The ladies were flabbergasted.

The guys on the opposing side clearly heard it as well, and their blood instantly boiled. “This guy is way more arrogant than that snooty brat!” someone among them rebuked.

Gu Fei was too lazy to explain himself, and he took two more steps forward, rubbing his hands together and saying, “So who is it that I am up against?”

“Me!” A Thief emerged from the party of male players. He was originally invited today to deal with Royal God Call. The others could only look on when he stepped out, as it would be awkward to visibly compete with him for a chance to engage in this PvP.

Gu Fei nodded his head and asked, “How high is your HP?”

“What?” the Thief asked, dumbfounded.

“I’m asking for your total HP,” Gu Fei replied seriously.

“What for? Why would I tell you that?!” the Thief asked, stupefied. This is a PvP; being as secretive as possible about our stats is of course the way to go. To think that there’s someone who would ask questions like this.

“If you don’t tell me your HP value, it won’t be easy for me to

hold back!” Gu Fei was still saying very seriously. He was not like the gaming experts Sword Demon and the rest who knew the algorithm related to the game like the back of their hands and could determine the opponents’ data by using Appraisal. Gu Fei did not know all these finer details. He only knew that his current opponent was a Thief, a job class with inherently low HP, and was within the range of being insta-killed by his spells. It was out of good intention that he was asking for the opponent’s total HP.

But how would the regular players be able to comprehend such a different way of thinking? As a string of admonishment echoed in the air, the Thief felt that he was being heavily looked down upon and angrily bellowed, “Hey, you punk! I want a deathmatch with you!”

The meaning of ‘deathmatch’ was obviously a fight until one of the PvPers was dead. It was a special term that was created by pretentious gamers. When they were facing opponents obviously not on par with them, asking “Do you want a deathmatch?” before a PvP would apparently make them look very dashing.

Gu Fei had of course heard of such a term before. Right now, he could only smile and say, “Is that really necessary? It’s getting harder and harder to level up these days!”

Thinking that Gu Fei was feeling apprehensive, the Thief became cockier, “Don’t mind me, please. Aren’t you afraid of not being able to hold back? I’m actually giving you a chance right now. Kill me if you really have what it takes!”

Chapter 117 - The Loneliness of an Expert

Gu Fei unassumingly stepped forward. Claspng his fist with his other hand, he said to the Thief, "Please!"

This was a dated martial arts salute that only kung fu practitioners like Gu Fei would perform before a sparring session, so why would an online gamer perform such traditional gesture as well? As expected, the Thief merely snorted at Gu Fei's saluting gesture and stepped forward to face him.

The Thief's weapon was not a dagger but a wooden baton. For Thieves, they would be able to learn a new skill called Bludgeon upon reaching level 36 and, as the name implied, it was a skill that could only be activated using a blunt object. Frankly speaking, Bludgeon was the Thief skill that had no actual value in PvP.

Bludgeon, like Backstab, must be executed when a Thief was standing behind an opponent. Even if Bludgeon was successfully performed, it should still be followed up by Backstab, which had the highest damage output among the current skill sets of Thieves. Who would not consider Bludgeon as an unnecessary move after this? If a Thief had the time to use Bludgeon, why should he or she not just use Backstab right from the start? Would that not be an even more straightforward manner of attacking?

This was why examining the mentality of the players was sorely needed.

Those who would attack with Bludgeon instead of Backstab most likely possessed the mentality of taking the enemies lightly or wanting to show off. A Thief hitting an opponent with Bludgeon to inflict the five-second Dizzy status effect and then calmly brushing dust off his or her boots before taking out a dagger to Backstab the opponent... How gratifying the sight would be! This action was similar to treating PvP as child's play. Even if the opponent failed to comprehend the condescension behind it, the act would still be

very pleasurable to the Thief who had done it.

Currently, the Thief fully assumed that Gu Fei was looking down on him. This fueled his desire to deal with Gu Fei with that redundant method, as he wanted to treat the latter in the same belittling way.

On the contrary, Gu Fei was actually treating this matter very seriously as he solemnly loosened the strapped Moonlit Nightfalls on his back.

“A sword?” The Thief tried to make sense of what he was seeing. Moonlit Nightfalls’ black luster was truly eye-catching to the Thief, yet he could not uncover its traits even after appraising twice. Thus, he was left wondering about the high-grade sword’s features. Gu Fei was no longer a newbie like when he first started playing Parallel World, as he had finally learned the Appraisal skill and reached rank 8 of it after using the skill repeatedly for a month. Although it was at a mediocre rank among all the players, he could at least safeguard himself against the Appraisal of others. Presently, others would no longer be able to fully check his equipment from head to toe like before.

Appraising a higher grade or tier item was harder than a lower tier item; this was the basic rule in-game. Therefore, it was no mere coincidence that the Thief failed to appraise Gu Fei’s clothing and sword despite numerous attempts.

“Can we start now?” Gu Fei asked when the Thief remained stationary for quite a while.

“Coming!” as the Thief answered, he deceitfully dashed toward Gu Fei. Eliminating a Mage in a PvP was actually very easy for a Thief, as the Thief only had to get close to the Mage and furiously stab him or her. Provided that the Thief was at close range and the Mage was unable to increase the distance between them, even normal attacks would suffice to do the job.

Nonetheless, the present Thief was still carrying the wooden

baton firmly, as he fully resolved to execute Bludgeon on to Gu Fei no matter what, even if he had to take that extra step of getting to Gu Fei's rear. The Thief resolutely strode forward before he made a sudden turn, agilely appearing behind Gu Fei. What a slow response! the Thief merrily thought to himself, truly believing that this fight was going to be an easy one.

Gu Fei indeed did not respond... at all. He merely maintained his stance of holding the sword, which was firmly planted to the ground, with his two hands. At the moment that the Thief arrived behind him, he moved his mouth to chant, "Ring of Fire! Release!"

Too late! the Thief thought to himself, completely disregarding the defensive spell Gu Fei had just casted as he continued to carry out his plan of bludgeoning Gu Fei.

A puff was heard; it was the sound of the Ring of Fire's flaming orb burning the Thief. Gu Fei took two steps to his side and extricated himself from the enemy's range of attack.

The Thief's Bludgeon missed. In the next instant, he began to feel the lethargy that players would feel whenever they lost too much HP. Upon glancing at his bar of HP, he received the shock of his life. He raised his head again, just in time to see Gu Fei take two steps backward while smiling brightly at him, "We are done now, right?" The Thief opened his mouth wide, yet not a word left it.

The spectators were even more confused as they could not understand why the two had suddenly stopped fighting.

The Thief stood rooted to the spot for a while before quietly walking back to his comrades. Gu Fei dismissed his Ring of Fire and went back to where the ladies were as well.

Both parties gawked at the two who had just returned to them, asking, "What happened?"

The Thief was too ashamed to speak, while Gu Fei lightly answered with: "We're done!"

“Done?!” everyone exclaimed, astonished.

“Who won?” This was what everyone was truly wondering about. The Thief frowned, while Gu Fei smiled. The answer was obvious.

“When did the fight even start?” everyone tried to make sense of what had just happened.

“Exactly when did you hit him?” the clique of sisters asked Gu Fei.

“Exactly when did you get hit?” the bunch of brothers asked the Thief.

The answers were the same on both sides, “Didn’t you all see the burning fire just now?”

“Burning fire? That Ring of Fire? You call that ‘burning’?!” All reacted in the same way.

“My HP bar turned red already!” The Thief’s expression turned grim. In Parallel World, HP bar was normally displayed in green, turning yellow if it got depleted past the halfway mark and red if it dropped to the final 10% and below.

“With Ring of Fire? No way that that little burning fire could turn your HP bar red! You must be mistaken,” someone skeptically commented.

“Why don’t you give it a try and get burned by him yourself!” The Thief was still mulling over the issue himself! He did not feel good since he could not figure out how he had just lost.

The gang of men started to size up the crowd of women, “Is someone pulling tricks from their side?”

“Hey! Stop making things up just because you guys have lost!” the ladies exclaimed indignantly. Although they were equally bewildered by what had just transpired, they were still the winners in this duel since Gu Fei was on their side. Getting Gu Fei’s

explanation as to how he had achieved victory in this PvP could wait at a later time.

“For Ring of Fire to burn someone till his HP turned red... Do you all believe that?” someone from the opposing side asked the ladies.

Although the ladies internally did not believe that it was possible as well, they still said externally, “Yes, we do!” Women sure were scary when trying to cover up a flaw.

The group of men was instantly tongue-tied. Men usually emerged victorious when it came to PvP, but when it came to bickering—well, even if the men were to win over the women in that aspect, they would still be accused of being rude. In conclusion, there was simply no way that they could get the upper hand in this matter.

At this moment, a hotshot Warrior stepped forward and issued a challenge to Gu Fei, “Try setting me on fire. I wanna see how much of my HP will get depleted.”

All the ladies encouraged Gu Fei, “Burn him! Burn him!”

Gu Fei swept his eyes over to the guy and said, “Wait a moment.”

“What’s wrong? Dare not do it anymore? Or are you looking for another way to keep up this charade?” the hotshot asked knowingly, thinking that he had caught Gu Fei red-handed.

“Cool-down period for my spell,” Gu Fei looked at him pitifully. He had never thought that someone would have worse knowledge about the game’s mechanics than him.

The hotshot hung his head down in embarrassment.

When the cool-down period of Ring of Fire ended, Gu Fei stepped forward once more. The hotshot straightened his back and bellowed, “Come on! I’ll see just how much HP you can burn off of me.” At the same time, he vigilantly eyed the ladies, “Don’t even think of pulling some tricks again! I can see your every move from here!”

The ladies expressed their disdain toward him.

“If I win this duel, you’re not allowed to pester them again starting tomorrow,” Gu Fei resolved to not demonstrate his ability for nothing.

The hotshot was momentarily stunned, turning his head back to his comrades to seek their opinions.

Some of the men briefly conferred and willingly nodded their heads in agreement.

“Ring of Fire! Release!” Gu Fei went straight to the point, casting out a flame ring and charging toward his opponent. The hotshot had yet to come to his senses when Gu Fei finished burning him, dismissed his Ring of Fire, and retreated away. This spell drained mana continuously, so it was burdensome for Gu Fei.

“How is it?” the others nervously inquired.

The hotshot glanced over at his HP bar and was overjoyed, “It didn’t turn red at all! Just a little close to turning yellow. This punk is playing tricks, after all!”

The others’ expressions turned pale upon hearing this. Gu Fei mildly said, “You have high HP. If you have resistance to magic, your HP bar would of course not turn red.” Deep down, he was thinking, This fellow’s gaming knowledge is indeed much worse than me.

Actually, the hotshot Warrior was not lacking in gaming knowledge; he was simply too absorbed on the matter at hand that he forgot to consider other factors. Now that he had regained his senses, he felt quite shock as well. As was stated by Gu Fei, he indeed had an Endurance-based build and was geared up with magic resistant equipment. A spell that could burn a Thief’s HP bar until it turned red could only inflict so much damage when it came to a magic-resistant Warrior like him. In that case, the damage output of Gu Fei’s Ring of Fire was truly staggering to the point of

making others speechless. The hotshot silently retreated to his party of men and talked in hushed tone with them.

Over at the corner where Amethyst Rebirth stood, the members were all rejoicing. As they prepared to start grinding, they noticed that the opposing side did not make a move to leave at all. Luo Luo asked loudly, “Is it not time for you people to leave?”

“Leave? Why would we leave?” someone said on the other side.

“Shameless! A bunch of shameless people! How can you be so shameless!” the ladies angrily blurted out.

However, the group of men remained unnerved, “Babes, that bro just stated that this is a duel. Since it’s a duel, then there should clearly be a winner and a loser. Do you think we will simply give up when our representative’s HP bar has yet to turn yellow?”

“Stop twisting the facts!”

“You’re all being unreasonable!”

“Shameless!”

The ladies were all in uproar, causing Gu Fei to feel stressed out as well. He hurriedly stepped out and said, “Alright, come out. Let’s get this over with.”

“No problem,” the other side replied; the hotshot Warrior came out again.

After a brief analytical discussion, the group of men maintained their views that the Ring of Fire spell did not have that kind of damage output. The more they thought about it, the surer they were that the source of the problem was that top-grade sword of Gu Fei. The sword’s traits could not be appraised after several attempts, making them even more certain of their analysis.

None of them had heard of a sword with ‘Spell Damage’ trait, so it was natural for them to not consider the possibility of the player before their eyes wielding a level 70 weapon leagues beyond

everybody else right now. In the end, they all came to this conclusion: “His sword must have a trait that boosts Ring of Fire’s damage output by leaps and bounds, which is why his spell appears to be a little over the top.”

“I should’ve bolted toward him when he dismissed his Ring on Fire... It would’ve been a sure win!” The hotshot Warrior slapped his thigh regretfully.

“It’s still not too late to do that now!” someone in the group grinned wickedly. In every group out there, one member always assumed the role of an incompetent tactician.

“How so?” the others asked while looking at him.

“The range of Ring of Fire and Cyclone, which one do you guys think covers a wider range?” the ‘tactician’ asked.

Everyone instantly got what he meant. The Cyclone skill was not bounded to any weapon, so it actually had a very flexible range. The longer the weapon a Warrior wielded, the wider the range that Cyclone could cover. As long as Cyclone was unleashed using a long weapon, such as a one-handed sword, and not a short weapon, like a dagger, the tornado formed by this attack could cover a wide area that was larger than Ring of Fire’s AOE.

“But will he still be alive if I use Cyclone?” the hotshot Warrior asked.

“Who cares?! When skills are activated, mishaps, like someone dying, can occasionally happen. It’s not like they forbade us from using skills,” the tactician justified.

“You’ve got a point!” the others agreed.

That discussion naturally resulted into the men refusing to leave. With the excuse that they had yet to admit defeat, they suggested for the duel’s continuation.

“It’s okay. It’s just dueling again; it’ll be quick,” Gu Fei comforted the ladies.

The same Warrior came out once more; he was trying his best to keep a firm grip on to a heavy sword while only holding the very end of its hilt. Rumors had it that this little trick would expand Cyclone's range of attack.

Gu Fei's strategy was still the same: He summoned Ring of Fire first and then darted toward the Warrior. The others presumed that this was the only trick up Gu Fei's sleeves. Where else could they find a Mage's fighting style that involved casting Ring of Fire and then hurling himself or herself at an opponent?

The Warrior was calm and ready, yet Gu Fei's darting speed toward him still caught him off-guard, causing him to activate Cyclone in a frenzied haste.

Gu Fei had long anticipated Cyclone upon seeing that signature hand movement. He was a little taken aback at first as he did not expect his current opponent to actually unleash Cyclone. With this attack, a Mage would probably be insta-killed, violating the two parties' agreement of stopping the duel when one dueler's HP became low.

Gu Fei hesitated for a moment, as he tried to analyze the situation from a martial arts expert's perspective, trying to find out if his opponent was merely feigning the attack to intimidate him. While Gu Fei was still pondering about this, the Warrior had already spun himself into a whirlwind. Screams could be heard from the party of ladies as they saw this.

He's serious! Gu Fei hurriedly raised his sword and stabbed into the Cyclone's center once he saw an opening, hurling himself outward by borrowing the attack's force. He was getting riled up inside upon seeing that his opponent did not intend to hold back. Thankfully, Gu Fei was able to add points to his Agility with his every level up until he got to level 39. If he still had his level 30 speed, his moment of hesitation just then would result into his death by the Cyclone skill. He was actually being kind with this bunch of guys by repeatedly casting Ring of Fire to make them

retreat on their own.

“Fireball! Shoot!” Gu Fei casted, flinging the ball of fire that that had formed.

While the Warrior was shocked that Gu Fei could slip out of his Cyclone, he did not think much of Gu Fei’s casted Fireball.

In Parallel World, there was a special term called ‘Verdict’. When the same or different skills were activated simultaneously and clashed with each other, Verdict would determine how much damage both sides could inflict. For example, a normal sword slash could cleave a ball of fire apart. This meant that Verdict for a normal sword slash was higher compared to the Fireball spell. When these two different attacks clashed with each other, the attack of the Fireball spell would be close to being useless.

Of course, the rules for Verdict were not that simple. Besides the algorithm related to the different skills and spells, all sorts of factors, such as the character stats, attack speed, and damage output, could affect the outcome of the clashing attacks.

Still, based on the above-mentioned factors, the Warrior’s Cyclone undoubtedly had a high chance of winning Verdict.

Gu Fei’s Fireball was not something he had randomly casted out, though. He actually casted it with the same approach that he had utilized to defend himself against Cyclone by stabbing into it when he saw an opening: precise timing. Gu Fei casted Fireball only after he was done with his calculation, as he intended for the spell to hit the opponent by slipping through the tiny gap found in the spinning Cyclone. Judging from the rules, Gu Fei’s method would allow the Fireball spell to avoid colliding with the Cyclone skill. If it worked, Verdict would not be necessary.

In the end, Gu Fei’s ball of fire still failed to escape the fate of being eradicated by Cyclone. He was unable to bypass Verdict even with his precise timing because the air flow caused by the spinning Cyclone was within Verdict’s jurisdiction. The weak ball of fire

was no match for the squall that Cyclone had created and it dissipated the moment it came into contact with the spinning attack.

Gu Fei was not discouraged by this outcome though, as another idea just flashed through his mind. Just as he was about to cast Fireball again, the Warrior's spinning stopped.

Seeing that Gu Fei was outside of Cyclone's attack range, the Warrior would of course not continue spinning around mindlessly. He figured that this was an excellent chance to close in on Gu Fei since the latter had dismissed his Ring of Fire after being thrown outward by the Cyclone skill. With this thought in mind, he stopped his Cyclone and sprinted toward Gu Fei. In his eyes, Gu Fei without his Ring of Fire was just a vulnerable Mage that was at his mercy.

Actually, Gu Fei was about to do some more experimenting! He felt somewhat regretful that the Warrior had stopped his Cyclone, but the opponent advancing closer to him was what Gu Fei wished for as well. With no intention of retreating, Gu Fei also dashed toward the opponent.

The Warrior had initially been worrying that Gu Fei would attempt to buy time for the cool-down period of Ring of Fire to end by running in circles, so he was very delighted when he saw Gu Fei running toward him instead.

The two were about to clash headlong with intense emotions running amok inside them. Seeing that Gu Fei was still three steps away from him, the Warrior promptly activated his Charge skill with a roar.

Warriors themselves had very slow movement speed, but it was the other way around for the attacking speed of their skills. However, in the eyes of Gu Fei, Charge could not pose a threat to him no matter how fast it was. This was because the signs of someone who was about to unleash the skill were simply too

obvious. After a month of pursuing a PvP lifestyle through bounty hunting, Gu Fei now possessed an in-depth understanding of the various in-game skills. When it came to understanding the game's algorithm, he was still inferior to Brother Assist, Sword Demon, and the rest. But when it came to his judgment in actual combat, he was on a whole other level compared to the rest of them.

At present, the Warrior was bending over and clenching his glutes, so Gu Fei immediately deduced what he was about to do. Gu Fei dodged to the side as the Warrior frantically charged ahead, naturally failing to hit Gu Fei. Gu Fei swiftly reacted and pushed with his leg the opponent's buttocks to help increase the momentum of the Warrior's Charge by two more meters. With Gu Fei's assisting kick, the Warrior uncontrollably stabbed his sword into a tree that was behind Gu Fei previously.

No one knew how the system calculated the damage inflicted upon the tree, but it seemed that its defense was very weak; that single stab managed to pierce through it with the tip of the blade coming out from the tree's other side. The Warrior screamed inside his mind, Oh, sh*t! There were simply too many similar scenarios like this in wuxia novels: If a sword stabbed too deeply inside a tree, pulling it out would be very difficult.

Sure enough, the sword did not even budge despite him concentrating all his strength into his hands to free it from the tree. This was when Gu Fei came upon him. He casted no spell; choosing to make his way beside the Warrior, he proceeded to cleave downward with his two hands on Moonlit Nightfalls.

Such a scenario was hard to come by in a PvP setting, so the Warrior did not know the proper way to react if someone domineeringly tried to cleave his arms off during a PvP. Since it was something he had never thought of before, he could only rely on the conditioned reflex of his body and act accordingly. The realistic presentation of the game made the Warrior think that he was in real danger. Quickly pulling his hands back, he retreated.

If Gu Fei really wanted to chop his hands off, he would have no chance to escape at all; fortunately, Gu Fei was merely trying to instill fear in him. He could not help but chuckle inwardly as he saw how quickly the Warrior had let go of his sword's hilt and retreated from him.

A Warrior without a weapon was of course inferior to a Mage. An empty-handed Mage could still cast spells, after all! Meanwhile, a barehanded Warrior could not perform Charge, Cyclone, or any of his or her skills. As for the current Warrior, his sword was stuck on a tree! If I don't hurry and recover it... What if others take it? What if the system removes it? What if it is treated as part of the tree from now on?

The Warrior was getting anxious, yet Gu Fei had no regards for his feelings as he chased after him with the sword in his hand.

The Warrior lost his sense of PvP now that he was weaponless. He did not know how to defend against the lustrous weapon that was fast heading his way, so he continued to flee like a frightened rat, yelling, "Sword! My sword! Hurry up and help me get my sword back!" A few comrades of his absentmindedly went to retrieve his sword for him.

Meanwhile, Gu Fei continued to chase after the fleeing Warrior all over the grinding spot. Gu Fei was an all-Agility Mage equipped with high-grade boots right now, so there was simply no suspense in the sight of him chasing after the Warrior. Gu Fei jabbed at his back again and again, asking, "Is it turning red yet?! Is it turning red yet?!"

"What are you talking about?! What is turning red?!" the Warrior asked hysterically.

"Is your HP bar turning red yet?!" Gu Fei clarified, as he continued to poke at him.

"Very soon!" the Warrior hollered.

“Tell me when it’s turning red,” Gu Fei said while he kept on stabbing the Warrior’s back.

“It’s turning red!” the Warrior said immediately.

Gu Fei’s sword remained leveled upon the Warrior’s back, but he did not continue stabbing. He asked, “Do you yield?”

“I yield! I yield!” the Warrior put his hands up.

“Mhm!” Gu Fei acknowledged, putting his sword away.

“My sword!” the Warrior did not seem to care about his HP bar that had turned red, as he immediately went to recover his sword that was still stuck on the tree instead of approaching a Priest to heal him after getting freed by Gu Fei.

“Just what is the meaning of all this?” the spectators were on the verge of breaking down, especially the group of men who was at a loss.

“He yielded,” Gu Fei answered, shrugging his shoulders.

“This...This...” The group of men had a dreadful expression on their faces. They waited until the Warrior recovered his sword before someone stomped his feet, saying angrily, “We’ll be back the day after.” For them, there were just too many coincidences that led to their losses in that second duel. The Charge skill that ended up causing a Warrior’s sword to get stuck into a tree... Could things be even more ridiculous? A Warrior that lost his weapon and was stabbed until he forcibly yielded to the opposing Mage... It was simply too humiliating. They all left while feeling resentful.

“Have a safe trip back!” Gu Fei waved at their departing figures.

The ladies were laughing among themselves. Luo Luo made her way to where Gu Fei was and praised, “You’ve got some moves.”

“It’s nothing special,” Gu Fei laughed. Countless players wished that they could attain such an OP state of being able to settle a brutal PvP in a relaxed manner, yet it seemed that Gu Fei’s

attainment in melees might be a little too high. Making good use of the terrain, evading at the right moment, and retaliating at every opportune moment... Regular players would never think that all these were done on purpose. The sword-getting-stuck-into-a-tree incident was the only thing that he had not accounted for; still, it served as a nice cover-up that led to the others thinking that everything that had happened was merely coincidences stacking together.

Nobody managed to appreciate the brilliance of the scenes that were perfectly orchestrated by Gu Fei... Such was the loneliness of an expert; who could actually understand it?

Chapter 118 - Gu Fei's Grinding Strategy

Now that no one else was trying to compete for their grinding spot, the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies began to take their usual positions to start grinding for levels. Evidently, they had long since formed a fixed routine for this grinding spot with one another. After getting into position, the ladies exchanged nods and shifted their gazes at a very bemused Gu Fei.

“Uh... What am I supposed to be doing?” Gu Fei asked, clueless.

“Luring the monsters,” Luo Luo answered.

“But I’m a Mage!” Gu Fei exclaimed in surprise. Although this was his first time participating in a party grind, it was common knowledge that Mages were the main offensive force during level grinding. Thus, an arduous task, such as monster luring, was rarely assigned to them.

Luo Luo reluctantly shared, “Our group line-up is already fixed. Royal usually did the monster luring.”

Gu Fei heaved a deep sigh as he looked up the sky. Royal sure had it rough! Not only did he have to rise up to the challenge when there’s a duel, he also had to do the most tedious task of monster luring! He’s pretty much a male nanny at this rate! As for me... “Ptooey!” Gu Fei irritably spat to the ground. To think that he would be reduced to being a substitute male nanny....

“It’s not easy for a Mage to lure monsters around here,” Ice Glaze remarked from the perspective of a Mage.

Luo Luo simply smiled and said, “Miles is no ordinary Mage. He can run REALLY fast.”

“Off you go! Off you go!” the other ladies urged Gu Fei to begin once they heard that.

Gu Fei feebly lifted his sword in hand and rushed toward the center of the clustered monsters nearby. Drawing the monsters'

aggro was his way of luring them.

People should not assume that Gu Fei was ignorant of a technical skill called ‘monster luring’. As a Mage, especially one that had always been grinding alone, Gu Fei had long since perfected his technique to lure monsters. He swung the glistening blade in a three-hundred-sixty-degree arc, causing the surrounding monsters to chase after him. With the long line of monsters trailing behind Gu Fei, it was as if a train had arrived by the ladies. “Where am I luring them?” he asked loudly.

“Argh! I forgot to draw the circle on the ground!” Luo Luo exclaimed, smacking her forehead with her palm in consternation.

In actual fact, the ladies’ grinding positions and respective attacking turns were devised beforehand by Royal God Call. The circle mentioned by Luo Luo was his idea as well. Since the female Mages of this grinding party were lacking in terms of spell-casting techniques, their Descending Wheel of Flames would often fail to hit all the targets. Hence, Royal God Call came up with this idea of the ladies directing their flame wheels into a drawn circle at a specific time, while he handled the grasping of the right timing to lure monsters into the circle.

Whether Descending Wheel of Flames could hit all the targets or not with this strategy depended entirely on Royal God Call’s monsters luring skill.

“Royal always drew the circle, so I’ve forgotten about it,” Luo Luo explained as she pulled out her magic staff. She then proceeded to draw a circle at the center of their grinding spot using the magic staff while calling out to Gu Fei, “Lure the monsters elsewhere first; I’ll be done here in a jiffy.”

The other ladies intently watched Luo Luo carve a line to the ground. Female players were truly thorough in whatever they did, as none of them removed their gazes on Luo Luo until she finished her work. While they were admiring the roundness of her drawn

circle, Luo Luo called out to Gu Fei once more, “It’s done! You can lure them over here now!”

Not hearing any sign of movement, the ladies finally shifted their gazes from the drawn circle to where Gu Fei and the monsters were. The sight that greeted them was of Gu Fei’s lone figure bathed by a flame’s afterglow and surrounded by a litter of monster corpses.

“No need for that. I’ve taken care of them already,” Gu Fei said.

The ladies looked blankly at one another. They only watched Luo Luo draw a circle for a bit, yet Gu Fei managed to clear off all the monsters in that short span of time? They all wondered how he did it, as none of them saw him in action.

“Let’s wait for them to respawn!” Gu Fei announced as he walked toward the ladies.

“How... did you kill them?” Luo Luo asked.

“Descending Wheel of Flames, of course! Didn’t you ladies see it?”

All the ladies shook their heads.

Apparently, my act of killing the monsters is less interesting to watch than Luo Luo drawing a circle on the ground. How distressing... Gu Fei remarked dryly in his head, feeling irked.

“Try doing that again later,” Luo Luo.

“Alright. But you girls do the luring this time,” Gu Fei requested as he acquiesced.

“Ah?”

“You all lure the monsters. I, alone, am enough to take care of them,” Gu Fei reiterated.

“But usually—”

“That’s when Royal is around. It’s different now, so everyone

should make adjustments, accordingly,” said Gu Fei with a straight face, radiating the confident aura of an expert from head to toe.

Luo Luo thought that he had a fair point, especially since she had heard that the leveling method of the other party of ladies with War Without Wounds was different from theirs. The other party was mainly made up of melee job classes with few Mages, but its leveling efficiency was about the same as Luo Luo’s party of mostly Mages. The factor that results into a high grinding efficiency for leveling must be the strategies that experts construct! Does this mean that Miles is a one-in-ten-thousand expert gamer, too? War Without Wounds and Royal God Call’s online gaming achievements go way back, and everyone in Amethyst Rebirth is utterly convinced of their capabilities. Does Miles also have such capability? Luo Luo doubtfully thought to herself. After all, someone who had an extensive knowledge about online gaming like Royal God Call and the rest would never add all their points to Agility when choosing a Mage job class. Still, look at how fast Miles is running! Luo Luo remarked to herself in astonishment.

In the limited spare time that they had while waiting for the monsters to respawn, the ladies expected Gu Fei to go into details of what they should mind when fighting with the monsters later, such as their standing or running stances as well as the monsters’ weak spots to target with their spells. However, Gu Fei remained mum. He only said something when the monsters had already respawned and his words were only: “Lure them back!”

The ladies were in turmoil and were momentarily at a loss of what they should do.

“Lure one monster back each! Now, go!” Gu Fei finally started issuing commands to them.

“But we’re Mages!” a few protested, puzzled.

“Aren’t Mages the best at luring monsters?” Gu Fei asked, puzzled as well.

Mages who did solo grinding, like Gu Fei, were indeed the best at luring monsters. Nonetheless, actually finding Mages who could challenge the monsters by themselves was rare. The few female Mages exchanged looks.

“Go and lure them back!” Luo Luo said to them as well. She was curious of the unique strategy Gu Fei had in mind. Those times that she had been grinding levels with Royal God Call, Luo Luo had learned a lot of things and realized that online gaming involved many strategies.

The ladies apprehensively approached the surrounding monsters. “Fireball! Shoot!” Their dainty cries filled the air.

“Bring them back together once you lure one each!” Gu Fei shouted. The ladies headed back with the monsters chasing after them. With them luring the monsters singly, the monsters no longer moved in a train-like formation. Only when players were luring monsters by themselves would the AIs chase after them in single pile. Right now, the monsters based their alignment to the ladies’ running order.

“Run in a more orderly fashion,” Gu Fei said aloud as he gestured with his hand at them. Looking to their right, the ladies formed a row as they continued running toward the drawn circle.

“Run closer to one another,” Gu Fei indicated with his hand once more. The nine ladies proceeded to form a three-by-three square formation as they kept on moving. Gu Fei nodded his head in satisfaction. He then raised his sword and yelled, “Descending Wheel of Flames!”

The ladies raised their heads and looked toward his location, yelling, “The monsters are not in the circle yet!”

“Don’t look over there! Focus on running a few more steps forward first!” Gu Fei yelled back, rattled. His nervous expression affected the ladies, and they quickly rushed forward, causing their formation to become a bit disorderly in the process.

“Alright, that’ll do! Stay at your current positions!” Gu Fei ordered aloud. Everyone stopped running. Half of them faced backward to look at Gu Fei’s casted Descending Wheel of Flames. With the flame wheel’s emergence, he finished his chant, “Descend!”

The flame wheel rolled down instantly, scorching the ground below. The ladies’ hearts pounded fast at the sight. Had they not listened to Gu Fei’s instruction to run a few more steps forward, a portion of that flame wheel would have landed on their heads.

There were nine monsters initially. Two ladies had run too fast that the lured monsters lost track of them, so Gu Fei’s Descending Wheel of Flames only landed on seven monsters. The flame wheel faded away instantly, leaving behind the burned corpses of seven monsters on the ground.

Gu Fei walked toward the ladies and said, “Killing the monsters is all that matters; why bother luring them into that circle?” He then singled out the two ladies that had run too fast, “Don’t be so nervous! I know that your normal running pace is slower than the monsters, but there’s no need to run too fast. We’ve got plenty of time. Once the monsters form into a group, I’ll be sure to deal with them.”

Nobody knew what to say, especially Luo Luo.

Strategy formed a small part in Gu Fei’s attacking style, as it was more like a flat out display of his power. If they compared the attacking styles of Gu Fei and Royal God Call, one depended on his superb monster luring technique while the other heavily leaned on his high Spell Damage. For one flame wheel to insta-kill all the monsters...This was not a technique, but purely his superior Spell Damage. Although Gu Fei’s casting of Descending Wheel of Flames was very accurate and timely, his savvy spell-casting was overshadowed by his monstrous Spell Damage.

The current grinding party was mostly composed of Mages, so

the ladies' admiration for Gu Fei right now was simply off the charts. They were screaming excitedly, and each of them asked questions, such as how high his Spell Damage was or how high his spell proficiency was.

Gu Fei glanced over at his character window, and revealed his Spell Damage to them.

With the current level 40 Mages' high Intelligence, Gu Fei's Spell Damage, which was mainly boosted by his weapon, was no longer that impressive. Nonetheless, it was still a lot higher than the ladies'. Combined with the destructive power of Descending Wheel of Flames, the damage dealt by Gu Fei was enough to insta-kill level 40 monsters.

This was not the upper limit for Gu Fei's Spell Damage, though. Take Spell Mastery as an example; the Spell Damage boosted by this trait was not included in the Magic Attack Power stat displayed on the character window, as it was something that would only come into play in actual combat. Equipment with traits that boosted magic-related stats worked the same way. Thus, the 'Spell Mastery +1' and 'Magic Damage +10%' traits of Midnight Spirit Robe were also not included into the algorithm displayed on the character window.

Whatever the case might be, the efficiency of this party's level grinding would only become better from now on with Gu Fei's fighting force.

Putting all these things aside, Gu Fei's normal grinding routine consisted of him luring nine monsters into a group. Right now, there were nine people who did all the luring of the monsters for him. What was the difference between the two? Gu Fei could now laze under a tree and just watch the ladies run all over the place to lure monsters....

"Gather up once you all finish luring the monsters!" Gu Fei shouted. The ladies gathering together meant that the monsters

behind them would gather up as well. When Gu Fei pointed his sword and casted Descending Wheel of Flames, the world grew quiet once more. Level grinding like this is quite relaxing! he thought to himself.

Chapter 119 - Grinding on Monsters beyond Their Levels

Gu Fei treated Moonlit Nightfalls as a teacher's pointing stick and instructed his guildmates to run all over the grinding spot that they had claimed as their own. The bold and confident tone he used to address them and the aura his body emitted had convinced the ladies that he was a natural-born instructor who used it for a living.

That was truly the case, since Gu Fei's job as a P.E. teacher had him instructing students to run around the academy grounds in reality. Compared to those lazy students that only put forth half-hearted effort in his P.E. classes, the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies currently before him were way more diligent and obedient. For instance, none of them headed west if Gu Fei pointed at east; they also gave their all into running and luring the monsters in this grinding map.

After a few rounds of monster grinding, Gu Fei clutched his sword under his armpit, clapped his hands, and shouted, "Take five at your current position! Stop luring the monsters!"

No one was so obedient this time. Gathering around Gu Fei, they asked, "Why are we stopping? Why the need to rest right now?"

"Mana recovery," Gu Fei sat on to the ground and took an apple from his dimensional pocket.

The ladies composed mostly of Mages became aware of the situation. It was faster to recover mana by eating fruit and, as expected, Gu Fei stood up not too long after. He waved at the crowd of ladies surrounding him and commanded, "Continue!"

The ladies became busy again... but only for a short while. Just as they were beginning to enjoy luring the monsters after a few rounds, Gu Fei clapped his hands once more, "Take five and

recover your mana!”

“What?” The ladies questioningly looked at Gu Fei who had sat on to the ground to munch on fruit once more.

“He only casted the spell for five times, right?” everyone asked one another, bewildered.

“You are out of mana after casting Descending Wheel of Flames just for five times?!” the ladies clamored with widened eyes. They could understand why he had run out of mana the first time, as he had dueled with players before and lured and killed monsters after, but he only rested and ate an apple moments ago... He should have fully replenished his mana when they had resumed grinding, right? A fully replenished mana that was only capable of powering Descending Wheel of Flames for five times... Was this the competence that a Mage should be having?

Gu Fei sighed, “It can’t be helped! I don’t want this to happen as well.”

“How high is your spell proficiency?” Ice Glaze was more optimistic; she assumed that Gu Fei’s spell proficiency was so high that it caused his spells to consume a lot of mana.

Gu Fei did not intend to reveal his spell proficiency, as doing so would only cause him to be ridiculed by these ladies. He merely sighed and gave a general answer, “I don’t have high spell proficiency; it’s just that my mana is low.”

Luo Luo explained to the others, “Miles poured all his points into Agility, so his Intelligence is lower compared to others.”

Gu Fei nodded his head in confirmation.

The ladies kindly consoled Gu Fei, saying that he should not fret about it much since he could reallocate his stat points upon reaching level 40. After this segment, they very generously offered the variety of fruits that they had on them to Gu Fei. This gesture allowed Gu Fei to find out exactly what kind of fruit each lady

liked: three liked apples, three liked bananas, two loved pears, and one loved peaches.

Gu Fei felt touched. He could not help but ask them a string of questions and request: “Where did you buy these bananas? Where can I get peaches? Give me some more pears!” His low mana forced him to buy and eat fruit all the time, yet he only knew where to buy apples. Munching on apples day after day had naturally caused him to grow tired of them that he now felt like puking whenever he had to eat one.

Fortunately, the game was not so uptight that it required players to finish a whole apple. As long as they took a bite, the system would consider them as having eaten an apple and would recover their mana after three seconds. While keeping a once-bitten apple for later consumption was possible, it would not be able to replenish mana again.

After Gu Fei ate one banana, the grinding party resumed their activities. Five casted spells later, the ladies stopped running on their own before Gu Fei could say something and waited for him to consume another fruit.

Although it was somewhat grating to halt their level grinding after every five casted spells, their current grinding method’s efficiency was undeniably something that the usual grinding methods could not hold a candle to. Fortunately, Gu Fei’s mana recovery was fast so the ladies did not have to wait long for him to fully replenish it. This was a reprieve – if it could be considered as such – in Gu Fei’s otherwise frustrating situation.

While the ladies felt satisfied with the rapid rate that their experience points were increasing, Gu Fei thought differently. After a few more rounds of monster grinding, Gu Fei could not help but suggest during his latest mana recovery session, “Grinding here is too slow. Let’s switch to another map.”

“How is grinding here slow?” the ladies asked.

Gu Fei counted with his fingers, “There are ten of us and this grinding spot has a respawn rate of nine monsters at a time; if we consider everything, it’s almost like you all are only standing by for one monster each to respawn before luring them back. While killing them doesn’t take much time, leveling up through this process is very slow!”

Luo Luo smiled wryly and said, “That may be the case. But the way things are in the game right now, a grinding spot is already considered as good if it can provide one monster for every player in a grinding party. Look around us; every grinding party is more or less in the same situation.”

Gu Fei nodded his head, “So I suggest we switch to another map.”

“Where else can we go?!” the ladies asked, baffled. They added, “Every level 40 grinding map is crowded with people.”

Gu Fei smiled, “To a level 50 grinding map. There should be fewer people in it.”

“Grinding on monsters beyond our levels!” all the ladies exclaimed with wide eyes. Everyone knew the significance of grinding on higher level monsters in Parallel World. But with their mediocre abilities, the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies were simply not capable of challenging higher level monsters and merely envied those who could. Thus, the idea of grinding at a map populated by higher level monsters never crossed their minds.

Gu Fei’s Spell Damage was indubitably strong. Thinking that level grinding was a piece of cake with the assistance of such a powerhouse, these amateurish female players enthusiastically agreed to the idea of grinding on monsters beyond their current levels.

In this case, Luo Luo could be regarded as among the players with higher level of understanding of the game’s mechanics. She could not help but consider Gu Fei’s incorrect stat point allocation and Spell Damage that was enhanced by top-grade equipment. His

superb irregularity as a player allowed him to insta-kill level 40 monsters, but could it still do the same with level 50 monsters?

Gu Fei did not notice her hesitation, though. Upon seeing the majority of the ladies agree to his idea, he packed up the variety of fruits given to him by them and prepared to leave. His limited Strength made carrying everything himself impossible, so he could only ask some of the ladies to carry a few for him.

“Hey. Can you really deal with level 50 monsters?” Luo Luo asked when he handed out some bananas to her.

“I can try,” Gu Fei replied confidently.

Luo Luo could not bring herself to dampen the spirits of the others, so she decided to go along with them. The entire team left Yunxia Valley energetically.

At a distance of two mountains, Geyun Mountain Ridge was the nearest level 50 grinding map to Yunxia Valley. Yunxia Valley was a grinding map located by the foot of the mountains, while Geyun Mountain Ridge was one that was situated on a mountain top.

Only a few parties were level grinding at Geyun Mountain Ridge just as Gu Fei had said, so dividing the map into several grinding spots like in a level 40 grinding map was not required. Looking from atop the mountain, the sight of the monsters wandering all over the place made the ladies very excited. Each of them resolved to listen well to Gu Fei’s arrangement.

Luo Luo immediately discovered the oddity within this map. The players grinding over here all had melee job classes, such as Warriors and Thieves, and were accompanied by Knights or Priests. Parties consisting mostly of Mages that she could usually see in level 40 grinding maps were nowhere to be seen here.

Since Parallel World did not exempt players from friendly fire, Mages and melee job classes, like Warriors, could not attack at the same time during level grinding. Mages mainly attacked with AOE

spells, so if melee job classes, such as Warriors and Thieves, hurled themselves toward the monsters at the same time, it went without saying what the consequences would be for them.

This was why grinding parties in Parallel World were usually divided into two sorts: Mage party and no Mage party. Obviously, the Amethyst Rebirth's grinding party handled by Royal God Call belonged to a Mage party, where a large number of Mages gathered together to strengthen the long-range damage that they could deal on monsters. As for the other party handled by War Without Wounds, it was a no Mage party that focused on dealing close-range damage.

In this current level 50 grinding map, the lack of a Mage party made Luo Luo feel somewhat apprehensive. As she expressed her doubts to everyone, Gu Fei simply laughed it off and said, "These level 50 monsters are resistant to fire magic, so dealing with them is a bit tough for Mages."

Gu Fei previously experienced the might of level 50 monsters when he was hiding in Youye Valley with the whole 'Bounty Mission' matter in Yueye City. At that time, killing one monster required him to cast the Repeating Fireball spell first before following it up with the simple Fireball spell. Although Gu Fei was eight levels higher than his previous self, his Magic Attack Power did not actually increase much as he had not added points to Intelligence. Thus, his competence at dealing with level 50 monsters more or less remained at the same level.

It was weird that the AOE spell Descending Wheel Flames could insta-kill level 40 monsters, yet the concentrated spell Repeating Fireball with its higher damage output could not insta-kill even one level 50 monster. The monsters' level was only increased by ten levels, after all. Judging by the previous stat growth rate for every ten levels, Gu Fei's Repeating Fireball should be capable of insta-killing level 50 monsters.

It was only after a joint analysis with the experts of Young

Master's Elite mercenary group that they had reached a conclusion: the level 50 monsters had higher fire magic resistance, which caused the damage dealt by the Mages' fire-based spells to be severely lessened against these monsters.

The ladies gawked at Gu Fei, asking, "Then, how do you plan to grind on them?"

"The usual way!" Gu Fei answered thoughtlessly.

"You can insta-kill these level 50 monsters?!" the ladies asked, astonished. They estimated that Gu Fei's Spell Damage was just enough to insta-kill level 40 monsters.

Gu Fei shook his head, "Nope."

"Then, what do we do?"

"Who among you all has the highest Spell Damage? I should be able to get by with an assistant," Gu Fei inquired. He followed the ladies' gazes to Ice Glaze and clapped his hands, "Let's give it a shot! Off to monster luring!"

The ladies hesitantly went to lure monsters. Just how high is Miles' Spell Damage? All had this same question in their minds.

"So fast!" all the ladies exclaimed upon seeing the fast approaching speed of the monsters to them when they each casted Fireball at the monsters. They were so shocked that they forgot their previous question of whether Gu Fei could insta-kill these level 50 monsters or not.

Luo Luo was the one caught in the most difficult situation. Holy Ball's attack range, which was smaller than Fireball's, and her movement speed, which was slower than a Mage, allowed the monster that she was luring to close in on her halfway in the blink of an eye. She retreated a few steps but the monster still managed to arrive right behind her, scratching her with its claws. Luo Luo instantly panicked. She did not know whether to stop and heal herself or to keep on running and bring the monster to Gu Fei.

The rest of the ladies could barely fend for themselves, so nobody noticed her predicament.

“Sis Luo Luo!” Ice Glaze, who was overseeing their grinding area after getting promoted as Gu Fei’s assistant, immediately saw Luo Luo’s perilous situation. But besides drawing attention to the problem, she was at her wits’ end on what she should do to actually help. That was when she recalled that Gu Fei was beside her. As she turned her head to ask Gu Fei for help, she saw that he was no longer beside her. She helplessly looked at Luo Luo’s direction once more, only to see that Gu Fei was already beside Luo Luo.

Ice Glaze felt stunned. It was only now that she truly grasped just how fast Gu Fei was. Such speed... It’s evident that his speed is higher than Royal God Call’s... Is he still considered as a Mage?

“How troublesome!” Gu Fei sighed. With his mind busy on calculating the sufficiency of his Spell Damage, he forgot to consider the fact that luring the monsters was already a tall task for the ladies. He had always been training alone and had an unusual way of allocating his stat points as a Mage, so he somewhat did not understand the usual hardships that regular Mages faced.

Chapter 120 - The Lovestruck Luo Luo

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Luo Luo heard a Mage chanting from behind her. Turning around, she saw Gu Fei, who had positioned himself between her and the monster, swing downward with his sword in hand.

“Be careful!” Luo Luo frantically warned as she bestowed Heal on to Gu Fei. For regular Mages, the opponents getting into close range with them usually meant only one thing: death. Thus, Luo Luo perceived Gu Fei’s act of getting between her and the monster as a sacrificial move and felt deeply touched.

“Don’t worry about me! Go save the others!” Gu Fei scrambled away as he told Luo Luo this. The monster began to chase after Gu Fei as its aggro shifted from Luo Luo to him.

The scene had descended into chaos. The ladies’ shrill screams reverberated all over the field as they were stubbornly chased by the monsters around.

Their perilous situation caused Gu Fei’s action to become frantic. He did his best to attract the monsters’ aggro toward him by throwing balls of fire formed from the Fireball spell at the ones he encountered while running about. “Xiao Bing, help me lure the monsters, too!” Gu Fei yelled at Ice Glaze who was just blankly holding her magic staff by the side of the field.

Ice Glaze nodded her head vigorously and promptly threw a ball of fire at one of the monsters after her guildmates.

The gap between the Spell Damage of Gu Fei and Ice Glaze was clearly shown in this instance. Ice Glaze casting Fireball once could not immediately draw the monster’s aggro toward her and had to cast the same spell thrice before succeeding into luring the monster from its initial target. In comparison, Gu Fei easily managed to ‘enchant’ three more monsters with his Fireball spell, all making a beeline for him with their claws out.

“Xiao Bing, run to where I am!” Gu Fei hastily shouted at Ice Glaze upon seeing that she was about to cast Fireball for the fourth time at the monster she had already successfully lured.

Eight ladies were originally tasked with luring the monsters and they could hang on without a hitch once Gu Fei lured four monsters toward himself, Ice Glaze got the attention of another monster, and Luo Luo was free to cast Heal steadily on to her guildmates who had the three remaining monsters.

Gu Fei calmly headed toward Ice Glaze’s location with the four monsters in tow. “Everyone, spread out! Prepare to cast Descending Wheel of Flames!” he shouted.

“We can’t aim well when they are all moving so fast!” the ladies exclaimed anxiously. Royal God Call would not have come up with that simple approach of drawing a circle to the ground for them to aim on if the ladies had had precise aims to begin with.

“Cast your spells freely and just make sure not to hit me!” Gu Fei adjusted his command. He was taking the ladies lightly with this latest command. With his fast movement speed, he was currently meters away from the chasing monsters. No matter how bad a shot the ladies were, their spells were unlikely to miss by more than three meters.

Luo Luo focused her Heal on to Ice Glaze next after Gu Fei took the monster that Ice Glaze had previously lured. This particular monster that had received multiple balls of fire from Ice Glaze started to sway on its feet upon receiving two more balls of fire from Gu Fei who was trying to gain its aggro.

Gu Fei took two more steps forward before checking the distance between him and the monsters. With such a huge gap between them, he reckoned that the ladies’ aims should not be so bad that their spells would hit him instead. With that in mind, he shouted at the ladies, “Attack now!”

“Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!” Sounds of the spell

being casted reverberated in the air. Numerous flame wheels, which colored the faces of everyone nearby crimson, emerged from the space above the monsters' vicinity soon after. Looking up, Gu Fei felt so relieved when he saw that no flame wheel had appeared above his head. He then leveled his head forward and pointed his sword outward, shouting, "Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!"

This was a level 36 mage spell.

Descending Wheel of Flames was an AOE spell that would descend from the sky, whereas Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno was an AOE spell that would ascend from the ground. Compared to Descending Wheel of Flames, this level 36 spell would continuously scorch the earth for five seconds and those within its area of effect would be subjected to continuous damage that grew weaker with every passing second.

The AOE of Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno was also much wider than that of Descending Wheel of Flames, so its damage output was much higher than the latter, especially if the five-second continuous damage that it dealt was included in the equation. Correspondingly, the spell's mana consumption was hefty; it was almost twice the amount needed to cast Descending Wheel of Flames once. This spell was rarely used during level grinding due to most grinding maps being packed with people and the number of Mages in a grinding party being quite high. Basically, the combined Descending Wheel of Flames of all the Mages would suffice to kill monsters, so increasing Spell Damage further by casting Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno was not necessary.

The ladies were indeed not being humble when they stated: "We can't aim well!" as the positioning of their flame wheels was very disorganized. Looking upward, Gu Fei almost mistook their flame wheels for the five Olympic rings with how scattered about they were. With such an unfocused firepower, the combined

Descending Wheel of Flames could naturally not hit all the targets; instead of all the flame wheels hitting the monster, some were hit by one and most were hit by two. The remaining HP of the monsters varied, so Gu Fei resorted to casting the more powerful spell, Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno, with a wider range to guarantee their deaths.

The flames that had abruptly risen from the ground fused together and formed a little wildfire. After the monsters got hit by Descending Wheel of Flames, they were then imprisoned by the wildfire Gu Fei's level 36 spell had caused. As a result, none managed to escape the sea of flames and all simply collapsed within.

The ladies cheered. This was a natural reaction from them since the ladies just saw that they had gained a lot of experience points by grinding on these level 50 monsters.

Gu Fei was a lot calmer compared to them. Wiping the sweat off his forehead, he asked, "Is everybody alright?"

Luo Luo was still casting Heal on to the ladies, as some still had yet to fully recover their HP. Eight of the ladies held one of their hands close to their chests, with half saying, "I was so scared!" and the other half gushing, "Miles is so amazing! Should we, Mages, add points to our Agility as well?"

His phantom-like silhouette just now had left a deep impression on to them. The ladies were naturally unaware of such unprecedented speed before, as even those Thieves and Archers who had reached level 40 rarely had full-Agility builds. The physical attack of these two job classes was connected to the Strength stat, so Thieves and Archers would normally distribute some points to Strength and would not solely focus on to their Agility.

Even if there were players with full-Agility builds like him, Gu Fei could still overpower them with the 'movement +60' and 'boost

movement speed by 35%' of his Windchaser's Boots. Gu Fei laughed and said, "Agility isn't bad! Everyone should add points to their Agility."

Luo Luo was a gaming savvy after all, so she carefully asked Gu Fei, "Your Agility is so high, yet you have such amazing Magic Attack Power. Just what kind of OP items do you have?"

"Of course my pieces of equipment are OP, since they're rewards from a chain quest," Gu Fei laughingly answered.

"Let us see them!" the ladies babbled.

Since it had come to this point already, Gu Fei had given up on the thought of keeping his pieces of equipment a secret. He actually did not think it was a big deal for others to know about them, especially since he shared the mindset of regular MMO players: half the purpose of obtaining top-grade equipment was to put them to good use and the other half was to show off to others!

Moonlit Nightfalls, Midnight Spirit Robe, and Windchaser's Boots. After showing his three most OP equipment one by one, the ladies lost their ability to speak. Compared to Moonlit Nightfalls, all felt that their magic staves were mere kindling sticks.

Actually, Gu Fei also had the extraordinary accessory, Eddie's Emblem, on him. However, he did not usually equip it on him since the emblem was related to his identity as Fugitive 27149. About a month had passed since that previous incident involving Fugitive 27149, yet many players would still talk about him during their free time. This was because nobody had yet to surpass Fugitive 27149's deeds even at present.

Luo Luo closely inspected the three pieces of equipment. After pondering for a long time, she suddenly grabbed Gu Fei by the arm to pull him to a side.

"What is it?" Gu Fei asked bewilderedly.

"Follow me," Luo Luo replied as she forcibly pulled on to him.

“Is something the matter?” Gu Fei asked wonderingly as he followed her.

Meanwhile, the ladies behind were animatedly discussing about Luo Luo’s action, “Is Sis Luo Luo lovestruck again?”

“Unlikely. It’s not like they only met today; she would’ve long been lovestruck if that had been the case.”

“You’re so silly! Have you forgotten what Sis Luo Luo said before? People being lovestruck in a MMO... Half the time, it’s actually them being lovestruck with the player’s equipment!”

“Oh, no! Miles’ equipment managed to trigger the ‘lovestruck’ trait of Sis Luo Luo!”

And over to where Gu Fei and Luo Luo were... Luo Luo dragged Gu Fei until they reached the canopy of a big tree. Only when she was sure that they were out of earshot of the others that she spoke, “You are that Close Combat Mage, aren’t you?!”

“Who said so?” Gu Fei countered with a question.

“You must be, with how powerful your three pieces of equipment are,” Luo Luo said confidently.

“Since you are so sure, then I suppose I am really him!” Gu Fei expressed his helplessness at her allegation. He had long grown tired of this question. What if he really was the Close Combat Mage? His days as Fugitive 27149 were long over and he no longer wanted his present actions to be dictated and restricted by his past persona. In short, he had withdrawn himself from Jianghu; a guy who still clung to his past identity did not seem to be a farsighted person anyway.

“Are you him or not?!” Luo Luo resolutely demanded, wanting to confirm it once and for all. She promised, “I won’t tell anyone, not even July!”

“Yes, I am!” Gu Fei clenched his teeth and answered. There, I said it. What is she planning to do to me next?

In the end, Luo Luo did not do anything to Gu Fei. She just grinned cheerily while staring at Gu Fei, which made the latter all jittery inside.

“She’s definitely lovestruck!” some of the ladies from afar said as they indicated the grinning face of Luo Luo, saying, “Just look at the way she’s smiling.”

“Don’t look at me like that. It’s really dangerous,” Gu Fei said seriously.

“What should I do, then?”

“Let’s just resume our level grinding!” Gu Fei suggested sincerely.

“Let’s go, then!” Luo Luo beamingly said as she walked toward the others.

What in the world is going on?! Gu Fei asked to himself. With such a flirtatious smile, is she still the same calm and composed Luo Luo?

The party’s level grinding started once more. Gu Fei made changes to their grinding strategy; from now on, he would be in charge of luring the monsters while the ladies would be responsible for attacking them at Gu Fei’s signal, with him delivering the finishing blow to the monsters afterward.

Based on Gu Fei and Ice Glaze’s action of attracting the monsters’ aggro just then, it could be deduced that his Spell Damage was three times higher than Ice Glaze’s. Since Ice Glaze was the one with the highest Spell Damage among the ladies, a powerhouse like Gu Fei was essential for them to level grind in this level 50 grinding map.

If the ‘monster luring’ technique had been the only requirement to grind in this level 50 grinding map, then Royal God Call would have long brought the ladies to fool around here. He would not have needed to draw a circle or device a special positioning for the ladies. After all, Royal God Call was above Gu Fei in terms of

monster luring capability.

Gu Fei charged rashly into a herd of monsters as he casted the Fireball spell with his left hand and slashed his sword with his right hand, causing seven or eight monsters to follow him back to the ladies. “Get ready!” he told the ladies loudly.

The ladies responded to him by gamely lifting their magic staves. Meanwhile, Luo Luo casted Heal on to Gu Fei who had yet drop even a bit of his HP as she simultaneously winked at him.

Gu Fei nearly fell down as his leg slipped a bit.

Luo Luo must have gone crazy... Just what kind of sickness is she having? Gu Fei densely pondered to himself.

Chapter 121 - Blatant Teasing

The party's level grinding process was going smoothly. Everything, ranging from Gu Fei luring the monsters, the ladies hitting the monsters with their Descending Wheel of Flames spell, and Gu Fei delivering the final blow on to the monsters... to Luo Luo winking at him from time to time, was going off without a hitch.

Not being able to stand it anymore, Gu Fei called Ice Glaze over during their latest timeout session while he munched on one fruit. He passed her the apple that she preferred and asked, "What's the matter with Luo Luo—did you see what she just did?" He indicated Luo Luo who had just winked at him for who knew how many times already.

"Yeah, I did," Ice Glaze cheekily pursed her lips.

"What's wrong with her?!" Gu Fei asked thickly.

"You are so oblivious to this!" Even Ice Glaze felt comfortable enough to joke with Gu Fei now, bluntly telling him, "Sis Luo Luo is lovestruck!"

"Lovestruck? How is that possible?" Gu Fei understood the term; what he could not fathom was why it only happened now, considering that it was not the first day that they got acquainted with each other. Having a sudden fondness for him just from finding out his other identity as the Close Combat Mage or Fugitive 27149 seemed a little too frivolous and farfetched. Besides, why would a level-headed person like her had such a superficial obsession? This was the second matter that Gu Fei could not fathom.

"Well, for matters like this..." Ice Glaze shook her head, saying, "Sometimes, we just feel the chemistry on the spur of the moment."

“How tricky,” Gu Fei looked over at Luo Luo as he said that. Luo Luo noticed his gaze once more and immediately winked at him again. The way she winked... It did not seem as if she was making sheep’s eyes at Gu Fei, nor did it seem like an act of seduction. It was more like... teasing... As the word ‘teasing’ flashed through his mind, Gu Fei could feel himself crumbling apart inside right there on the spot. Never would he have thought that he would be teased by a lady... He wanted to weep, but no tears came out!

“Miles, have you finished eating yet?” Luo Luo called out in a singsong tone.

“It’s blatant teasing!” The ladies were giggling while admiring Gu Fei’s current state of embarrassment. Gu Fei stood up without replying to her and headed to a slightly distant corner of the field to continue the task of luring the monsters.

“He didn’t confront her! How boring!”

“Is that so? I think it’s more interesting that he’s not confronting her...” The ladies had different views about Gu Fei’s reaction to being teased.

The level grinding resumed under the current situation. Although he was under a different kind of ‘assault’, Gu Fei’s monster luring remained flawless, showing everyone just how strong his willpower was. He remained calm in everything he did; he calmly lured the monsters, calmly ate a variety of fruits, and calmly took Luo Luo’s blatant teasing. Gu Fei’s present mentality of ‘ignoring the issue until it went away by itself’ was obviously an outdated approach. For the young ones of this generation, they would often face with stubbornness and perseverance the things that they were interested in.

Now that Gu Fei had made changes to his grinding strategy by doing the monster luring himself, the ladies were no longer standing in positions that would be targeted by the monsters and he of course was able to dodge the monsters’ attacks with his

fighting prowess. With nothing left to do, Luo Luo decided to bestow Heal on to him repeatedly, making the latter feel as if his entire body was being displayed to all with how it kept on glowing.

Gu Fei kept on luring the monsters and Luo Luo continued to bestow Heal on him unnecessarily ... Both remained like this until the end of their level grinding session.

The ladies' gaming hours were quite to Gu Fei's liking, as they suggested to conclude today's grinding session just as he deemed that it was time to log off. They gathered up to leave the level 50 grinding map together, feeling very satisfied with their accomplishment today. "What time are we meeting tomorrow?" everyone asked Gu Fei.

"I am just a substitute..." Gu Fei said instead.

"Come together with Royal, please! You're also grinding for levels, anyway!" all the ladies pleaded.

"I am used to grinding alone—"

"What's fun about grinding alone? Please come!" The bunch of ladies surrounding Gu Fei was adamant, cajoling, "We'll bring different kinds of fruits for you! You just need to be present!" One of them even said, "You like bananas, right? I'll bring more for you tomorrow."

"Am I a pet that can easily be swayed by bananas alone?" Gu Fei laughingly asked.

"There are still apples, peaches, and pears besides bananas... Which ones do you want?" the ladies answered with a question.

Gu Fei explained to them patiently, "Look. I've been a member of Amethyst Rebirth from day one... When did I ever grind with the other members before?"

The veteran guild members turned silent, and only the four newcomers curiously asked, "Why is that?"

“Because I’m used to grinding alone—”

“What’s fun about grinding alone?” They went back to that same question.

“Oh, great hero, Miles, don’t be so small-minded! Take all these women under your wing!” Luo Luo finally spoke.

Gu Fei did not say a word. He had always been grinding alone not because he was opposed to grinding with others but because nobody wanted to grind together with him. When he first started the game, he thought of grinding together with Fireball. However, Fireball valiantly declined his offer, not wanting to depend on Gu Fei to level up easily. He also learned that the other five members of Young Master’s Elite never grinded levels together after joining that mercenary group. As for his Amethyst Rebirth’s guildmates, they previously did not welcome his presence with such enthusiasm like right now. Since he also usually went to high-level grinding maps, the chances of him making new friends or meeting new people in those maps devoid of other players were virtually non-existent. All sorts of reasons led to Gu Fei grinding by himself all this time, but he definitely did not do it to get used to becoming an independent expert like Sword Demon and the rest.

Had it been the typical Gu Fei, he would not have rejected the ladies’ request, especially after seeing how enthusiastic they were to grind levels with him. Right now, however, Luo Luo’s sudden transformation into someone who was infatuated with him frankly left him quite shocked.

“What? Could it be that you are afraid of me?” Luo Luo smilingly asked.

“What’s there to be afraid of? I’m just not used to getting preferential treatment from a Priest,” Gu Fei answered lightly.

“Then, get used to it!” Luo Luo remarked.

“See you tomorrow,” Gu Fei said.

“See you tomorrow,” Luo Luo said as well.

All went their separate ways once they arrived at Yunduan City, either heading to the log-off points or going to do their personal matters. The level grinding session’s end did not mean that everyone would get offline. Out of consideration for people who worked and slept at regular hours, guilds and mercenary groups would do their joint activities during the peak hour of the game – from the time after dinner until the time before bed. The really large-scale or lengthy activities would only be conducted during the dead of the night when the ‘normal people’ were fast asleep.

Gu Fei saw Young Master Han, with eyes brimming with vigor, exit Ray’s Bar as he passed by it. “Hi!” he greeted.

“Time to work,” Young Master Han greeted Gu Fei with a liquor-induced burp and headed to the direction of the city gate. This one was obviously among those with irregular lifestyles that would energetically do their businesses once others were sound asleep.

Gu Fei headed to a safe zone to log off.

He had more free time the next day, so he logged into the game earlier than usual. He had a lot of idle time before the peak hour arrived, so Gu Fei hung Moonlit Nightfalls on his back and flashily wandered the streets, hoping to encounter a few robbers. In the end, his effort was in vain. Most players were law-abiding; even if they saw some top-grade equipment, they would at most fantasize about owning it inwardly and would never actually try to steal the item. As for those who would do such felonious act, they began walking on a more rational path after Parallel World’s release to the public. Although they could see that Gu Fei’s Moonlit Nightfalls was top grade, they would not hastily steal it without uncovering its traits through the Appraisal skill first.

Top-grade equipment referred to an item that possessed strong traits, which had obvious edges over the weak traits of regular equipment. If the traits of an item were lousy, then that particular

equipment would be nothing but lustrous trash. Those who wanted to rob equipment would never do so for collection purposes; since equipment-looters were either thinking of using the equipment themselves or selling it for money, none of them would of course steal equipment that they had failed to appraise. Killing a player for his or her particular equipment to drop was not an easy task, after all.

Gu Fei inadvertently found himself arriving at Ray's Bar after roaming around and failing to attract any robbers. He went inside and greeted Ray who pointed him toward the mercenary group's usual private room. This gesture meant: "Someone from your group is inside."

Gu Fei walked inside and indeed saw one member, Royal God Call, writing by a corner!

"What's the matter? Bringing homework to do in-game again?" Gu Fei asked.

Royal God Call lifted his head at Gu Fei's words before lowering his head to continue what he had been doing, "I'm writing the secret manual for Mages!"

The legendary 'Mages' Secret Manual' was supposed to be written by Royal God Call, but it turned out that he had merely promised to write one on a whim. Royal God Call previously bringing Gu Fei along to buy stacks of booklets and pens caused the latter to mistakenly assume that the former was about to seriously write the manual. When Gu Fei inquired about it several times afterward, Royal God Call always put it off as another day's work. A month later, Royal God Call resorted to putting up a blank look on his face and pretending to not know about it whenever Gu Fei brought up the issue, so Gu Fei eventually stopped expecting anything about it from Royal God Call. Thus, Royal God Call resuming his initial plan today made Gu Fei think that he had eaten something wrong. Gu Fei picked one booklet up, casually flipping through it before dropping it down. He asked, "How's

your ‘Bounty Mission’ going?”

Royal God Call’s expression dimmed, answering, “I managed to kill three, but the fourth one is on hiatus.”

“What happened?” Gu Fei pressed on.

“My target has many companions, so I dared not make my move.” Decision-making was an important quality expert gamers like Royal God Call had; when experts were faced with an unwinnable situation, they would oftentimes refrain from making a move. “What would you do if you encountered a situation like that?” he asked Gu Fei. Since players usually grinded together with others, Royal God Call firmly believed that Gu Fei had likely stumbled upon a situation like his more than once.

“Make my way over there and kill the target,” Gu Fei answered simply.

“Sh*t! That only applies to you!” Royal God Call felt foolish for asking such a question. Gu Fei’s circumstance was clearly different from the rest of them. Putting his ability to insta-kill his opponents aside, Gu Fei was a super melee expert, and many methods applicable to him were simply not doable for them. “It’s impossible to consecutively complete ‘Bounty Mission’ for one hundred times at this rate!” Royal God Call exclaimed in anguish.

“Want me to help you?” Gu Fei asked.

“How can you help?” Royal God Call asked with eyes wide open.

“By accompanying you, of course! I’ll slightly reduce your target’s HP, and then you can settle everything by shooting the target from afar!” Gu Fei replied.

“This...This...” Royal God Call stuttered, shocked. It was not that the idea was not good, but that it would waste a huge amount of Gu Fei’s time. Since the final objective of doing the ‘Bounty Mission’ was to get Royal God Call the reward, Gu Fei himself would not gain anything from helping him out. Even biological brothers were

not necessarily willing to help each other like this, right?

“What is it?” Gu Fei asked while looking at him in a puzzled way.

“Bro, you are a real brother to me!” Royal God Call was moved to tears.

“You brat! That’s very rude! Call me your uncle!” Gu Fei scolded.

“If you manage to get me the boots, I’ll even call you grandpa if you want!” Royal God Call threw himself at Gu Fei, saying, “Let’s go! Let’s go!”

Chapter 122 - An Archer in a Tavern

As the two left Ray's Bar, Gu Fei beckoned Royal God Call over and said, "Go ahead and do your 'Bounty Mission'. Call me when there's one that you can't handle."

Royal God Call nodded his head compliantly. He was already very grateful that Gu Fei had volunteered to help him, so he was not expecting for the latter to fully assist him and any support from Gu Fei would do. He and Gu Fei had the same thought: only asked for help when a target could not be handled alone.

The two went their separate ways, with Royal God Call getting a new 'Bounty Mission' – as his previous one had expired – and Gu Fei heading to a grinding map.

Based on Gu Fei's bounty hunting experiences for a whole month, the 'a lot of companions' situation that Royal God Call had encountered usually occurred over at a grinding map. Who would be able to summon and gather up a whole gang of brothers when he or she was just casually walking on the streets, anyway? At most, it would be a pair of lovers who would be capable of such feat.

Gu Fei had actually encountered many pairs of lovers while he had previously been bounty hunting. For the vile-looking boyfriends, he would just go straight up and finish them off. As for those with kind-looking faces, he would generously approach the pairs of lovers and asked for a private moment with his targets before inviting them to a secluded corner and saying, "Bro, I won't disgrace you in front of your girlfriend, so just say that you've been ambushed later." Only by then would he proceed to kill his targets.

There were some instances when his targets turned out to be the girlfriends. Dealing with those situations were trickier, since male players were often more hot blooded and the boyfriends would always confront Gu Fei angrily regardless of whether his first

strike landed on his targets or not.

Gu Fei would normally say, “I am on ‘Bounty Mission’, so snap yourself out of it!” to explain himself to the pairs of lovers before killing his targets and proceeding to deal with the partners afterward. For those boyfriends who understood the circumstance, Gu Fei would leave after casually exchanging a few blows with them. As for those who did not realize that Gu Fei was on ‘Bounty Mission’ and were continuously spouting foul words, he would straight up kill them. Suffering a level drop while their girlfriends were stuck in prison... truly a tragic, double loss.

Ironically, with how the PvP rules worked in Parallel World, Gu Fei’s PK value would not even increase by killing those boyfriends since they were the ones who had chosen to ‘die’ with their partners by initiating the attacks on to Gu Fei. Frankly speaking, Gu Fei was not afraid of acquiring PK points, as him doing ‘Bounty Mission’ would clear off the gained PK value anyway.

In the past month, Gu Fei even experienced hunting and killing the same people, with the most ridiculous one being a good-looking man whom Gu Fei had received the ‘Bounty Mission’ for three times in a row. Eventually, the two met for the fourth time in a tavern and the good-looking man burst into tears upon seeing him, “Bro, I’ll buy you a drink. Just please spare me!”

Gu Fei laughingly said, “You already know that I’m on ‘Bounty Mission’! Why be afraid of me if you don’t have PK value on you?”

“But I do have PK value on me....”

“Oh, that’s fine, too. My current mission target isn’t you.” After saying this, Gu Fei proceeded to slay the good-looking man’s wife who was sitting beside him, causing the man to cry even harder. Gu Fei paid for his drinks and silently left....

Having experienced the many ups and downs of PvP, Gu Fei finally realized something: Those who killed must be consciously aware that they could be killed as well. The players who were

aware of this would handle everything calmly whenever Gu Fei declared: “I am here on ‘Bounty Mission’” and do their utmost to go up against Gu Fei. Only the scummy players who did not understand this logic would lash out and spout nonsense, such as “None of your f*cking business!”

Just what reasons or mindsets did these people have when they killed others? Gu Fei had thoughts of doing research about the matter to understand it, but he immediately gave up upon remembering that it was not his forte.

A message from Royal God Call arrived while he was still deep in his thoughts. “HELP!” Royal God Call typed this word in English.

“So soon?” Gu Fei expressed his doubts, as he was not even out of the city yet! Royal God Call only needed such a short time to accept a new mission and acquire a difficult target?

“The target is not in a grinding map. He’s at a tavern and a bunch of people is drinking with him!” Royal God Call reported his location as he said that.

“Oh!” Gu Fei acknowledged as he made his way over to the direction of the indicated place. This type of targets that appeared inside taverns was indeed very troublesome for Royal God Call. Archers’ strong suit lay in their ability to perform long-range sneak attacks, which included the ‘kiting’ method of shooting people from afar. Excluding the fact that staying hidden in a tavern was impossible with the many pairs of eyes inside, the showy action of an Archer drawing a bow and nocking an arrow would surely cause a commotion, leaving no room for the Archer to launch any surprise attacks at all. It was truly hard for Archers to display their might in fixed, cramped spaces like a tavern that were populated by people.

Gu Fei arrived at that tavern not too long after and spotted Royal God Call standing and waiting anxiously for someone by the entrance. He quickly waved at Gu Fei when he saw him, “The

target is still drinking inside!” He politely asked, “How should we do this?” Royal God Call was being very courteous at Gu Fei as he knew that the latter was the real expert in this aspect.

“Which one is the target? Point the person out to me first,” Gu Fei said instead.

The two entered the tavern, and Royal God Call carefully pointed out his target to Gu Fei, “See that Warrior? It’s the one wearing a black cap.”

“Yeah, I see him,” Gu Fei affirmed.

“How should we do this?” Royal God Call nervously repeated his question.

Gu Fei took his sword out and coughed once loudly. Quite a lot of people looked over his direction, with some already displaying a change of expression on their faces. Gu Fei knocked on an empty table by the side with his sword and, as if he was declaring a holdup in a bank, he announced, “‘Bounty Mission’!”

Many tavern patrons began to grow nervous... Clearly, a lot of people with PK value were inside the tavern.

“Hey!” Royal God Call panicked. We should be doing a sneak attack! Although revealing our intention outright is a polite gesture, it’s not logical and reasonable at all!

Gu Fei had long pointed his sword over at the black-capped Warrior, saying, “You are the mission’s target; let’s settle this outside!”

While the others breathed a sigh of relief, the black-capped Warrior felt stunned. I’ve seen people doing ‘Bounty Mission’ before, but never someone who did it in such an arrogant way until now. Didn’t he see that I’m with others at this table? “Who’s this guy?” he asked aloud, thinking that he had stumbled upon a lunatic.

A player sitting at a nearby table drew closer to the black-capped

Warrior and whispered to his ear, “Good luck.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” the black-capped Warrior questioned, baffled.

“You don’t often hang out in taverns, right?” the person asked. As the black-capped Warrior nodded his head, the person sighed and said, “You’ll know what I mean if you hang out in taverns more often.”

The companions of the black-capped Warrior obviously barely hung out in taverns as well, as they were at a loss regarding this current situation.

“Hurry up!” Gu Fei urged.

“Miles, are you trying to get me killed?” Royal God Call asked, already teary-eyed.

Gu Fei paid no attention to him, “Hurry up and go outside! Let’s not fight inside the tavern; the others still need to drink their liquors!”

Enraged by Gu Fei’s words, the black-capped Warrior stood up violently. His partners shared the same sentiment and got up rather violently as well, totaling to six people.

“We’re just doing a mission; we request that unrelated parties do not interfere. Weapons are blind, after all. He’ll only be imprisoned after dying, but for others, dying means dropping in levels!” Gu Fei reminded everyone.

“Did you not hear me? I’m talking to you!” he suddenly hurled a kick outward. A thud was heard and a human figure faded into view as it fell down. The falling figure knocked a wooden stool over; the table next to the figure wobbled and was about to drop onto the person when Gu Fei swiftly reached for it with his hand and dragged it back to its initial position.

“We gotta pay up if we break anything. Go check if the wooden stool is broken or not.” Gu Fei was displaying his rich experience

with melees through and through.

Royal God Call went over to have a look. “It’s not broken,” he informed Gu Fei.

The Thief who had just fallen down was lying numbly on the ground and was having second thoughts about getting back up to his feet. He stole a glance at Gu Fei before peeking at his black-capped companion. The black-capped Warrior and his buddies dared not act rashly after that.

“Shoot him,” Gu Fei ordered Royal God Call.

“Now?” Royal God Call asked, dumbfounded. As an Archer, he felt that it was too shameful to openly shoot someone in such a showy manner.

“Would the people behind please make way!” Gu Fei shouted.

The spectators behind had long since dispersed from that area. Players who hung out often in this tavern had come across Gu Fei too many a time in this one month. They were quite the experienced bunch regarding his bounty hunting business.

“Shoot him already!” Gu Fei said.

“Using my skills?” Royal God Call asked.

“Must I spell out everything for you?! Do you know how to play or not?!” Gu Fei anxiously asked.

“Sh*t!” Royal God Call became anxious as well. This was the first time he had been accused of such a thing after years of playing MMOs. How can I be clueless of how to play a game? It’s just that I’ve never experienced such a flashy situation before! D*mn it! There’s truly a first time for everything! Royal God Call resentfully thought to himself as he nocked an arrow to his bow.

Just why did Archers refrain themselves from carrying out attacks in plain sight? It was because Archers’ attacks were simply too troublesome. The shooting preparation of Archers contained

many sequential actions that would lead up to the release of an arrow, so anyone with eyes and decent speed would be able to evade their attack. The current situation was an example of this; seeing Royal God Call draw his bow so openly in front of them, the group of men immediately attempted to dodge his attack by lowering their heads and hiding under the tables.

“You take too long to attack!” Gu Fei scolded Royal God Call.

Royal God Call felt aggrieved for himself, No matter how fast I draw the bow and nock the arrow, others will still have enough time to crawl under the tables! Must I be blamed for this? Just who is the one that really doesn’t know how to play a game?!

Gu Fei swiftly stepped forward and swung his sword. He was simply too fast for others to react properly, and they could only watch him slice a wooden table apart. “Shoot him now!” Gu Fei yelled to his side.

Swish! Royal God Call who had just finished his shooting preparation released an arrow. The arrow was shot out using the archer skill with the current, highest attack power, Snipe, so evading it at such a distance was simply impossible. The damage that Royal God Call could inflict on to others was not something to scoff at as well. Although the arrow failed to insta-kill the black-capped Warrior, the damage it dealt was enough to confound him.

Royal God Call did not wait for Gu Fei’s cue this time and already shot out his second arrow. He truly was an expert, since he knew the most important quality of being an Archer in a game like this. His speed when drawing a bow and nocking arrows was incredibly fast and his posture when unleashing arrows on Double Shot was prim and proper, which were all evidence that he had practiced the stance countless times.

Swish, swish! Two arrows flew out one after another. The black-capped Warrior hiding under the table just now frantically got up, only to be hit by Double Shot.

“You’re still alive! What an impressive amount of HP!” Royal God Call started to get cockier, swiftly nocking yet another arrow on his bow.

At this moment, the six companions of the black-capped Warrior that had been crouching under the table could no longer tolerate the ‘loneliness’, so they hastily stood up and darted toward Gu Fei who was the closest to them.

“Don’t care about me; just find a chance to shoot him!” Gu Fei shouted. He easily dodged the attacks of the six people that had encircled him as he slashed at the Priest among them. His attack perfectly interrupted the Priest’s bestowal of Heal.

Royal God Call nodded his head in acknowledgement and shot out his third arrow under the level 36 skill of Archers: Homing Projectile. Although this particular skill was not powerful, it had a terrifying homing ability that never lost sight of a target it had locked on. It was different from the Fireball spell of Mages that could only trace enemies for a short period of time.

The tip of the arrow, which had been powered by Homing Projectile, shone faintly with white light as it cut its way past the gap between people in this chaotic scene and struck the head of the black-capped Warrior.

The Priest that wanted to bestow his Heal kept on getting interrupted by Gu Fei, so the HP of black-capped Warrior did not even recover once and he ended up collapsing to the ground with that follow-up arrow.

“Time to leave!” Gu Fei hollered at Royal God Call, slipping past the gap that had emerged after the black-capped Warrior died. He then took out a gold coin and threw it toward the tavern’s counter. “Compensation for the table!” Gu Fei yelled as he fled from the tavern.

Chapter 123 - The Number One Mage

The tavern had one door each on the left and right side, and Gu Fei fled alone through the door on the right. As for Royal God Call, he did not see him come out from the other door. Gu Fei immediately returned to the tavern, yet Royal God Call was nowhere to be seen.

“Where are you, Royal?” Gu Fei grew nervous. Did the opponents catch up to him and end his life?

“I have your emblem teleport me away~” Royal God Call replied to his inquiry.

Such awareness... He’s a real expert alright. Gu Fei sighed in admiration. Back when he had just obtained Windchaser’s Emblem, Gu Fei would often forget to use it and mindlessly walk back to the Quest Assignment Hub on foot whenever he completed a ‘Bounty Mission’. Royal God Call just borrowed the emblem and used it a few times, yet the uses of Windchaser’s Emblem were already deeply ingrained in his mind.

Gu Fei raised his head up after ruminating on the issue and happened to see the few companions of the black-capped Warrior numbly standing on one spot and blankly staring at him.

“The ‘Bounty Mission’ just now...” Gu Fei began to patiently explain to them, “Was the mission of that brat who had just run away. I can contact him if you lot are looking for revenge.”

If this scenario occurred in reality, Gu Fei could fish out a cell phone to increase the sense of authenticity of his proposal. But since the situation was happening in-game, his proposal was fated to not be taken seriously as the others could not tell it even if Gu Fei indeed sent out a message!

As expected, the men standing opposite him did not take Gu Fei’s words seriously. Upon seeing that Gu Fei had returned to the

tavern, 'delivering himself to us' was the only thought that popped into their heads. All the black-capped Warrior's companions, including the Thief that had been kicked by Gu Fei before, were all clenching their teeth and glaring viciously at him.

Gu Fei was actually feeling very delighted inside right now, as this was exactly the kind of development that he was after! The chain reaction that arose after every 'Bounty Mission' was the thing that he loved the most; how else would he enjoy PvP if not for that?

"Uhh..." Gu Fei gave the others a friendly reminder out of habit, "Are you looking at me for revenge? Your levels will drop if you die, you know!" As everyone took three steps forward, Gu Fei also took a few steps onward while happily continuing to remind them, "Your levels will really drop!"

"You are the one whose level will be dropping!" roared someone from the opposing party as he wielded a weapon and charged at Gu Fei.

Gu Fei was simply overjoyed. He was just about to clash with the opponent with his sword in hand when a sudden gust of wind blew diagonally from his side. "A Spurring Meteor attack..." Just as Gu Fei said this, a guy was seen darting over while executing a Fighter's combo move. The angry opponent of Gu Fei was turned by the Fighter's attack into a stream of white light without being able to do anything else.

The sudden interruption to Gu Fei's PvP did not end there. A brave-looking Mage with fluttering long hair that had been standing next to the Fighter pointed a glowing magic staff to the feet of the remaining people and chanted, "Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!"

Casting an AOE spell inside a tavern... Gu Fei had never met such a dauntless Mage before.

The spell's flames rose abruptly from the ground with a range

beyond what Gu Fei had anticipated, making it apparent that the Mage's proficiency of this spell was very high. The players inside the tavern screamingly scrambled away from the flames for a while, as Gu Fei's would-be opponents were roasted inside the inferno. And just like that, his chance to PvP was reduced to nothing but ashes along with the five. "Argh!" Gu Fei groaned sadly; his free hand grasped the air in front as if he wanted to grab onto something that was originally his.

The blazing flames in the entire tavern painted all the nearby players' faces red. Gu Fei, who was rich in combat experiences, was currently pondering on how much it would cost to pay for the tables, chairs, and wooden stools that were being scorched by the burning fire.

The flames became smaller with every passing second until they finally got extinguished when the spell's duration ended. However, the few seconds from that the spell had caused some furniture to continue burning on their own. The surrounding players tried to put out the fire by thoughtlessly pouring their cups of liquor on to the burning furniture. Fortunately, the cheapest liquor that the players usually ordered was not hard liquor, so the flammable liquid only weakly fed on to the flames. Otherwise, the tavern would be a lot livelier.

The fire had been put out after everyone worked hard to contain the incident. The Mage, who had started everything, went to talk with the NPC tavern owner, probably to discuss about the compensation for everything. Although he had caused such a scene, none of the patrons lodged a complaint against him.

Such a dauntless Mage! Who would dare complain about him? He did not even hesitate to burn those five to their deaths, so he probably would not mind casting Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno on the loud-mouthed people as well.

The Fighter, who was the instigator just then, was currently looking at Gu Fei with a smile.

F*ck your smiling face! How dare you steal my PvP... Gu Fei's heart was in pain, but what made him even more in anguish was his inability to vent it out. These two seemed to genuinely be trying to help after seeing an injustice occur, and it was simply not right for him to turn them into his new PvP opponents. "Thanks! You've got some moves!" Not only could he not vent out, he also had to thank the two. Oh, life, look at how desolate you have made me, Gu Fei heaved a long sigh within him.

The Fighter smiled at him and said, "You are not so bad yourself, bro." As Gu Fei forced a smile on his face, the Fighter continued, "If you don't mind, why don't you join us for a drink?"

Gu Fei was momentarily stunned. They just 'took care' of my opponents, and now they're trying to treat me to a drink... Seems like they've got something else in mind!

The Fighter did not insist more after seeing that Gu Fei had yet to say anything. He apparently had another person with him as he waved at somebody else next. Together, the two ardently set about rearranging the overturned tables and chairs.

The fire in the tavern occurred mere seconds ago, yet the functionality of the scorched furniture was not the least bit affected. Done tidying up everything, the two chose a table and sat on the seats available while vacating two more seats – one was for their Mage companion, who was currently settling things with the NPC tavern owner, and the other was for Gu Fei.

Gu Fei laughed lightly as he saw this, approaching their table and silently sitting down on one of the empty chairs.

"Left Hand of Love," the Fighter introduced himself.

Gu Fei seemed to have developed a slight habit of commenting on others' IGN, so he immediately smiled upon hearing the name, "Then, what about the right hand?"

"Right Hand of Cool," the Archer sitting with them replied while

pointing to himself.

“We didn’t know each other before,” Left Hand of Love laughingly said, adding, “I never thought someone will have an IGN that rhymes with mine.” As he finished saying this, the two looked at each other with understanding. The way their lips curved upward while looking at each other sent goosebumps all over Gu Fei’s skin. Could these two be the Brokeback Mountain people spoken in legends?

The Mage finished his negotiations with the NPC tavern owner and joined them as well. “This is Drifting,” Left Hand of Love introduced the Mage to Gu Fei.

His IGN sounds familiar! As Gu Fei was thinking of this to himself, he noticed that the others around him were also thinking the same thing. Whispers could be heard all around them after Left Hand of Love said the name. Gu Fei was able to make out a phrase from all the whispers around them: the number one Mage. That was when he recalled where he had heard such a name before. ‘Drifting’ was the IGN listed on the very top of the Mages’ experience leaderboard and it was also listed quite high on the overall leaderboard. At present, only five people reached level 41 in Parallel World and Drifting was one of them.

Gu Fei had not heard that this well-known figure was a player of Yunduan City, though. The other two seem to be friends with him; are they all from another city? Since when did the various in-game cities start to get linked with one another? Gu Fei did not remember hearing the game officials announce anything about the teleporting arrays yet.

“What about you, brother? What’s your name?” the three collectively asked Gu Fei after introducing themselves.

Gu Fei smilingly replied, “Thousand Miles Drunk.”

“You’re THAT Thousand Miles Drunk?!” Even the dauntless Mage, Drifting, had a change of expression on his face.

Gu Fei's smile turned uncertain, "Yeah." Gu Fei had actually expected such a reaction from Drifting. Drifting's IGN had always been on the very top of the Mages' leaderboard ever since the start of Parallel World, but there was a period of time when the 'Thousand Miles Drunk' IGN outranked Drifting's on the leaderboard.

Although Drifting surpassed Thousand Miles Drunk a few days later, the incident had undoubtedly left a thorn inside Drifting's heart. From that point onward, he began to pay attention to the 'Thousand Miles Drunk' IGN on the leaderboard. However, the ranking of Thousand Miles Drunk eventually sank and sank until it finally disappeared into the ranking of the thousands to the point where he could only find the IGN by keying it in.

Drifting could not help but be curious about him! He even tried adding Thousand Miles Drunk as a friend, only to discover that the latter had disabled his account's friend request feature. Drifting was very aware that this was a normal move, especially by a high-ranking expert on the leaderboard, due to a very logical reason. Any player only had to search an individual's IGN to add someone as a friend in-game. As for high-ranking players like them, they might enjoy the adorations of others this way, but they would also receive the harassment of countless others at the same time. Friend requests with messages, such as "Big bro, take me under your wing", "Big bro, teach me how to play", "Give me money and I'll stream myself live for you", and so on, made it impossible to play the game peacefully without them disabling that feature.

Drifting came to Yunduan City for a different reason, so he did not expect to meet THE Thousand Miles Drunk that he had long been curious about. The leaderboard lists did not include the city that the players lived in, after all. After thinking of all these things, Drifting started to talk to him, "Never thought I would get to meet the two renowned figures of Yunduan City so soon after arriving."

"Ah? What?" Gu Fei asked, dumbfounded. Since when did I

become a renowned figure?

Drifting exchanged looks with Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool, “We have seen Ray, the acclaimed owner of Ray’s Bar. As for Miles, you’re probably the other renowned figure of Yunduan City, right? That Close Combat Mage 27149?”

The tavern patrons were in an uproar. Compared to the number one Mage, the title ‘Close Combat Mage 27149’ was evidently more distinguished here in Yunduan City. However, Gu Fei reflexively responded, “No. I am not.”

“You are not?” Drifting asked, skeptical.

“Would I need you guys’ help if I were 27149?” as Gu Fei asked this, he could not help but channel a bit of the bitterness in his voice, since they had just snatched his PvP away from him.

“If we knew just then that you are 27149, we would of course not lend a helping hand,” Drifting answered frankly.

“Although I’m not 27149, I actually didn’t need the help just then. But...” Gu Fei stopped for a bit before continuing, “Still, you have my thanks.”

The three were stumped for a good while before they all said, “You’re welcome.”

“You’ve just accumulated 5 PK points in one shot... I have a friend who is actually doing ‘Bounty Mission’ right now, so be wary of him accepting the one targeting you.”

Drifting felt stunned, saying, “Is your friend not searching for local targets when he’s doing ‘Bounty Mission’?”

“Oh...” Gu Fei understood what he meant. Although Drifting had PK points on him, he was not a player of Yunduan City. Those doing ‘Bounty Mission’ in Yunduan City would of course not choose targets from other cities. As for those players from Drifting’s own city who had just picked up the ‘Bounty Mission’ for him, they were probably having their just desserts for targeting

such a high PK value player that they could not hunt due to Drifting currently being here in Yunduan City.

Drifting curiously asked, “Hmm? Is doing ‘Bounty Mission’ a hot thing in Yunduan City right now?”

Chapter 124 - The Yew Staff

The answer to whether ‘Bounty Mission’ was currently the hot thing to do in Yunduan City or not was of course ‘no’. In fact, Gu Fei had yet to see anyone else do ‘Bounty Mission’ enthusiastically like him – or at least that was the case in Yunduan City.

When Gu Fei answered Drifting’s question with a “No”, the latter curiously asked, “Then, why do you keep on doing it?”

“How did you find that out?” Gu Fei asked, stumped.

Drifting swept his gaze all over the tavern before answering, “Heard it from the others....”

“Oh...” Gu Fei understood now. In Parallel World, there were three places players would frequent: grinding maps, Peddlers’ Streets, and taverns. In that one month Gu Fei busied himself with the ‘Bounty Mission’, he oftentimes visited taverns to slay his targets. Places like taverns would usually have regular patrons; for instance, Young Master Han was a regular of Ray’s Bar. It was these regular tavern patrons that had spread to others about a certain individual who was obsessed with doing ‘Bounty Mission’.

Drifting, who was sitting beside Gu Fei, continued to speak, “I really wanted to meet that famous Close Combat Mage 27149, but I learned that all traces of him had long disappeared when I arrived here in Yunduan City. But it was also right after this that I heard the tavern patrons talking about another person who is really passionate with bounty hunting. I sure didn’t expect to get to meet him this soon.”

“He he...” Gu Fei laughed dryly. His action of doing ‘Bounty Mission’ every day for a month indeed earned him a bit of fame, but it was unlike the one enjoyed by his other identity. Most players were truly baffled by his action and some even went as far as to make fun of him. While some admired and feared his PvP capability, those people still could not help but wonder, Bounty

hunting every single day... Is there something wrong in that guy's head?

“So why is brother Miles so passionate about ‘Bounty Mission’?” Drifting asked the question that was on his mind.

Because it's my hobby? Nah... These people might get the wrong idea; they probably won't believe that reason, anyway. Knowing of this fact, Gu Fei chose to approach the issue from the perspective of a MMO gamer. He proceeded to take off his boots and put them on the table, “See this? This is the reward I got from doing ‘Bounty Mission’.”

The tavern patrons began to use the Appraisal skill on the Windchaser's Boots, and the sound of people gulping down their saliva could be heard moments later. Right Hand of Cool, the Archer sitting closest to the pair of boots, was so amazed by it that his eyes nearly popped out of his head.

“Completing ‘Bounty Mission’ for one hundred times in a row will get anyone a pair of Windchaser's Boots,” Gu Fei put the boots on again while saying this.

Drifting slightly furrowed his brows. The pair of boots was indeed a rare, top-grade footwear, but the condition for getting it was simply too harsh. He finally understood why Gu Fei's ranking on the experience leaderboard suffered a huge drop. To him, Gu Fei's action was a plain example of penny wise and pound foolish. Drifting could still understand why Gu Fei was focusing so hard on the ‘Bounty Mission’ if the latter were an Archer, but he was a Mage! As a fellow Mage, Drifting felt that Gu Fei sacrificing all the potential experience points gain just to get this pair of boots was not worth it, even though the boots would indeed make the latter more formidable. Drifting himself would rather buy such pair of boots for an expensive price than to acquire it through hard work like Gu Fei. The game officials had specifically stated before: no Parallel World equipment was ‘limited or restricted from trading’ to just one player. This pair of boots was no exception.

As he thought of this, Drifting posed another question to Gu Fei, “Do you have plans to sell this pair of boots?”

“Sell? Never thought of that before...” Gu Fei was somewhat taken aback when heard the word ‘sell’, as he did not possess the awareness to do in-game trading at all. The miscellaneous items he had looted from monsters every time he level grinded already filled up his entire Warehouse, yet he did not even bother to find time to sell them all off. So far, the only trading experience he had was consigning the system to sell some items in his stead over at the Auction House.

It was a must for players to study the workings of the in-game market for them to do well in the trading of items. Gu Fei did no such thing, though. He merely copied the prices that the others had set for the same items he wanted to sell. It was unknown whether those items he copied his pricing from belonged to dishonest merchants, but the one thing certain was that none of the items Gu Fei consigned for selling was bought by other players. In the end, he paid quite the hefty consignment fees due to his items remaining unsold for days, causing him to waste a fair amount of gold coins instead of earning such a sum. The fees were charged by the system, so they would directly be deducted from the players’ dimensional pockets with no room for negotiations at all. Gu Fei wept without tears when this happened to him and he gave up any idea of selling items again ever since then.

Right now, Drifting was suddenly discussing business with Gu Fei, causing the latter to be at a loss of how he should react. You slashing me will be a more straightforward way of making me feel that kind of pain again! Why are we even talking business!?

Seeing that Gu Fei did not intend to sell the pair of boots, Drifting thought of using a different approach. Searching inside his dimensional pocket, he eventually pulled out a magic staff. “Look at this, Miles,” Drifting said as he put the magic staff on the table for Gu Fei to appraise.

“Not bad!” Gu Fei exclaimed. Yew Staff; its name was displayed in golden letters. The required Spell Aptitude for it was 110%. It had Magic Enhancement +35%, Spell Damage +15%, Intelligence +10 points, and Spirit +10 points.

Yew Staff was a level 40 magic staff and was currently the highest grade magic stave for Mages. The ‘Aptitude’ trait that could not be found on common-grade items would only start appearing on higher-grade ones, such as the Yew Staff. This particular Yew Staff even had the trait of ‘Magic Enhancement+35%’.

Magic Enhancement worked like this: Assuming that an average magic staff had ‘80-100’ for its Magic Attack Power attribute, then the points would increase from ‘80-100’ to ‘108-135’ if the item had the ‘Magic Enhancement +35%’ trait. Similarly, other equipment would also have traits, such as Swordsmanship Enhancement, Marksmanship Enhancement, Defense Enhancement, and so on, depending on its job class affinity.

Simply put, this particular Yew Staff of Drifting offered a 35% higher Magic Attack Power than the other yew staves. With its additional traits of Spell Damage +15%, Intelligence +10 points, and Spirit +10 points, it was a top-grade magic staff that had a relatively high damage output.

“What do you think of trading your Windchaser’s Boots for my Yew Staff?” Drifting asked. He was of course attentive of Gu Fei’s Moonlit Nightfalls, but he could not appraise it despite his numerous attempts. Since it is being used by a Mage, can it actually be a magic sword?

Regular players were unaware of the existence of magic swords, but Drifting had come across a NPC owning one during a quest. That magic sword possessed Magic Attack Power and Physical Attack Power. Although it appeared very OP, such equipment with dual traits actually had low value for either trait. In fact, that NPC’s magic sword possessed a Physical Attack Power that was

lower than one-handed swords of the same tier, and its Magic Attack Power was also inferior to magic staves of the same tier. Besides a cooler design, Drifting failed to see the practicability of magic swords.

As for Gu Fei's sword, its design was even more stylish than the NPC's. If Drifting's guess was correct, then the features of Gu Fei's sword would probably be unimpressive as well.

This was why Drifting had taken out the Yew Staff to trade with Gu Fei, as he knew that players always preferred weapons the most. Based on Drifting's acumen, the Yew Staff should be a more valuable item for Gu Fei than the Windchaser's Boots. Thus, he was almost certain that Gu Fei would not reject this trade.

Unfortunately for Drifting, the suggestion only stunned Gu Fei for a bit before the latter quickly replied, "No need for that." Drifting's Yew Staff was undoubtedly an attractive offer, yet it was regrettably up against Moonlit Nightfalls and Gu Fei.

If they were to see things from the weapons' perspective, Moonlit Nightfalls' traits were actually a match to Drifting's assumption of how weapons with dual traits had weaker traits compared to weapons of the same tier. Moonlit Nightfalls was a level 70 weapon, however. Therefore, the level 40 Yew Staff was still no match for Moonlit Nightfalls even with its weaker traits.

Another factor why Gu Fei would not trade his boots for the staff was because he preferred sword fighting techniques over staff fighting techniques. In fact, in Gu Fei's eyes, the Yew Staff was just a regular mage weapon that almost had non-existent physical damage. This staff is nothing but trash! was Gu Fei's honest opinion about the Yew Staff; this opinion alone was enough to break Drifting's heart so thoroughly.

Nevertheless, Drifting seemed to have also taken into consideration the possibility of Gu Fei refusing the trade, as he did not act too surprised when Gu Fei indeed rejected his offer and

merely took the staff back after uttering, “A pity.”

They continued to chat casually after that, with Right Hand of Cool periodically asking Gu Fei details on how to go about doing the ‘Bounty Mission’. Obviously, Archers like him and Royal God Call were very interested in Windchaser’s Boots.

Just then, Gu Fei received a message. He initially thought that the message was from Royal God Call with his signature “HELP!” typed in English, but it turned out to be from Luo Luo: “Oh, great hero, come and join us in leveling!”

“So early?” Gu Fei asked, surprised. It was an hour earlier than yesterday.

“The girls are very much looking forward to witnessing your magnificence,” Luo Luo answered.

“Coming,” Gu Fei replied. He then stood up and bade Drifting and the rest farewell.

“Are you going to grind levels?” Drifting asked with raised eyebrows, adding, “Why don’t we accompany you?”

“Ah? But I have my own party already!” Gu Fei automatically rejected.

“It shan’t be a big deal to include us three, right?” Drifting asked.

And so, Gu Fei sent another message over to Luo Luo.

“Are they good-looking?” Luo Luo asked.

“Uh... Passable,” Gu Fei said while inspecting Drifting’s overall appearance. Clothes made the man, after all. Drifting indeed looked very dashing especially if others judged him based on his outward appearance. And with that magic staff in his hand that resembled a burning flame with its reddish glow, he truly looked very cool.

“There are two more...” As Gu Fei was about to describe Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool to the girls, he saw the two

whispering very closely with each other. With goosebumps on his skin, he shared his speculation to the girls, “I’m getting the Brokeback Mountain vibe from them!”

“Ah? Really?!” Luo Luo asked.

“Looks the part to me...” Gu Fei replied, trailing off weakly.

“Come over! Tell them to come over immediately,” Luo Luo’s message carried a sense of urgency.

Gu Fei was dazed for a second before inviting the three.

Drifting walked abreast with Gu Fei on their way to the grinding map. Since they shared the same job class, it was inevitable for them to exchange their thoughts regarding it. Drifting asked, “The way you clashed with those guys at the tavern just then... You seem to have added a lot of points to Agility?”

Gu Fei nodded his head, “Yeah. I have an all-Agility build.”

“What?” Drifting thought he heard wrongly.

“All-Agility.”

Drifting was spitting blood inside. He paused for a long while before finally saying, “You must be a die-hard fan of attacking styles like ‘kiting’,” Drifting could not think of another reason that a Mage would add all his points toward Agility.

Gu Fei said, “I allocated stat points thoughtlessly since I didn’t know how to play the game before.”

Drifting spat blood within himself again; he then consoled Gu Fei just like how the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies had done before, “Everything is gonna be okay once you hit level 40. You can reallocate your points by then.”

Gu Fei could only smile at that, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with him.

Chapter 125 - The Abandoned Expert

Gu Fei, together with his newly acquired friends, headed toward Yunduan City's east gate. From afar, he could already see a group of ladies standing by the entrance of a nearby tavern. Left Hand of Love, who was walking behind Gu Fei, also noticed the group of ladies and excitedly pointed at them, "Oh, sh*t! What a bunch of babes!"

What kind of lousy remark is that? Gu Fei muttered to himself while reevaluating his impression of Left Hand of Love. Conventionally speaking, a gay man like him should not be so worked up upon seeing a group of ladies, and such a reaction should be reserved for when he chanced upon a 'top-grade' man like Young Master Han. Could it be that my speculation is wrong and there's nothing suspicious going on between these two? He looked backward and saw that the two were once again whispering closely among themselves. Whatever the case might be, the weird vibe Gu Fei was sensing from Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool's interaction made it hard for him to conclude what was really up between the two.

Arriving by the group of ladies, Gu Fei felt slightly startled as he saw yet another familiar face among them. "Will-low, you are here, too!" Gu Fei greeted her.

The two had yet to meet again after Will-low made Yunduan City her 'home' and joined the Amethyst Rebirth Guild at Gu Fei's request. The most they did was greet each other occasionally by sending pointless messages, such as "You there?" and "Yeah, I am!" Sometimes, Gu Fei would look through the members list of Amethyst Rebirth on the guild tab and see Will-low's level rising at a rapid rate. As expected from someone who was originally from Yueye City, she was very aware that power was everything in a game. Will-low's level was initially in the twenties, yet she was now a high-ranking member of Amethyst Rebirth. In fact, Will-low

was currently at level 39 just like Gu Fei, and he suspected that her experience points were higher than his.

Will-low's body was still as skinny as ever. If such a body belonged to a man, then it would be what people would call as 'skin and bones'. In a woman, this kind of body was what people would deem as 'slender'. Will-low smiled faintly and said, "I heard you are leading a party for level grinding, so of course I wanna tag along."

Gu Fei laughed sheepishly and said, "It's not exactly 'leading' to me; it's more like I'm their laborer." This certainly seemed to be the case yesterday over at the level 50 grinding map, as the monster luring, commanding, and inflicting the final blow on monsters were all done by Gu Fei. Furthermore, he had to endure Luo Luo's teasing with her Heal skill the whole time. Frankly speaking, Gu Fei failed to find any benefits from grinding together with the ladies besides him receiving different types of free fruits.

Meanwhile, Drifting and the other two were feeling completely dumbfounded. When Gu Fei said previously that he was leaving to grind with others, they never imagined that the 'others' would be referring to a bunch of women. This guy is quite capable, alright! The three gave him a thumbs-up mentally. He's a really talented man.

Gu Fei did not forget about the three. Pulling them over, he introduced, "These three are Drifting, Left Hand of Love, and Right Hand of Cool!"

Drifting was the number one Mage in the entire server of Parallel World and was the top five on the level leaderboard. Thus, he was currently holding his head up and waiting for the excited screaming of the ladies. And yet, the ladies merely glimpsed past him and focused their eyes on to Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool instead. They all said in unison, "Wow! You two's names are so moe!"

Four grown men suddenly turned into clueless youngsters, not having an idea of what the ladies had just said. Drifting waited for quite a while, yet nobody bothered to ask anything about him, as the ladies were all busying themselves with teasing Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool repeatedly. Gu Fei pulled Luo Luo over to ask, “What’s a ‘moe’? What does it mean?”

Luo Luo explained, “Take a look at how ‘moe’ is written in Chinese. The character for moe (萌) is made up of grass (艹), sun (日), and moon (月). The sun and moon symbolize Yin and Yang, which can also be interpreted as a man and a woman. So moe (萌) means that a man and a woman are hiding underneath the grass, implying an affair! Basically, ‘moe’ in this current context means that those two’s names are already hinting to an unconventional affair between them.”

To think that there is such deep knowledge behind all this! Gu Fei was simply blown away. After living for over twenty years, he just found out that ‘moe’ originated from ancient pictograms. What he did not know was that Luo Luo had just come up with such a nonsensical explanation.

“Come and join us, you three!” Luo Luo sent the three an invitation to party with them.

The trio hastily made their way over to party with the ladies. Drifting was the number one Mage in Parallel World and one of the top five players on the overall leaderboard, so those two tagging alongside him were of course no ordinary players as well. However, when faced with the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies, the three gaming experts’ gracefulness had all but vanished, turning into a kind of ‘awkwardness’ instead as the three were not used to interacting with such a large group of ladies before. The might of an all-female party was not something to be scoffed at, after all.

The grinding party set off to a grinding map vibrantly. The little girl who had ‘interviewed’ Gu Fei yesterday found a new target in Left Hand of Love and went up to him for more gossip materials.

And over at where Drifting was, Ice Glaze made the first move of approaching him, “Excuse me. Are you the one on the Mages’ leaderboard that—”

“YES! YES! THAT’S ME!” Drifting was overjoyed to the point that he felt like crying. Oh, heavens! Someone finally recognized me! Drifting’s gracefulness of being an expert gamer found its way back to him, and the fiery glow of his magic staff began to shine brightly again.

“How did you grind your levels? Your leveling rate is so fast!” Ice Glaze asked.

Gu Fei thought that the question was neither hard nor easy to answer, but it was one that they could spend a long time discussing. Oh, Drifting, one inquiry from a lady is all it takes to knock your feet off... What happened to that guy who dauntlessly burned five people to their deaths inside a tavern?

However, Gu Fei should not be so full of himself, as he was also being targeted by the ladies. Luo Luo bestowed Heal on to him while shouting, “Get yourself into the party! What are you thinking to yourself right now?” They were about to exit the city, but Gu Fei had yet to accept Luo Luo’s party request.

Will-low also got herself near Gu Fei, “It’s so hard to actually see you!”

“Is that so?”

“Yup. For one, you never involved yourself in any guild activities before,” Will-low said.

“Uh... That’s actually true...” Gu Fei admitted weakly.

“Why?” Will-low asked.

“Not used to it. It’s all girls over there,” Gu Fei answered.

“What’s so bad about that?” Will-low asked, eyeing Gu Fei weirdly. “To be able to play together with so many beauties...

Many people are hoping for such a chance!”

“I’m used to grinding alone,” Gu Fei replied. Having to repeat that phrase these past few days, he could not help but grow weary of it.

Will-low did not question him further and changed the subject instead, “I met Coward’s Savior yesterday, by the way.”

“Huh? He came over to Yunduan City? But he didn’t contact me!” Gu Fei opened the tab for his friends list to have a look and saw that Coward’s Savior was currently offline.

“You’re not online at that time,” Will-low explained.

“Oh,” Gu Fei felt relieved. Ever since Gu Fei left Yueye City, Coward’s Savior had been keeping in contact with him. This was because he had promised to Coward’s Savior before that he would teach him the Mantis Fist Style.

Many different styles existed for the Mantis Fist. The few kung fu moves that Coward’s Savior could execute belonged to the Seven Stars Mantis Fist Style, while the one that Gu Fei knew was the Six Harmonies Mantis Fist Style. They were two separate styles that had different specialties in terms of fighting methods and techniques. Although Gu Fei never thoroughly researched Seven Stars Mantis Fist Style before, his foundation and qualification in kung fu should be sufficient for him to give Coward’s Savior a few pointers.

With Gu Fei’s mentality of being a role model to others and being responsible until the very end, he specially went to Xinhua Bookstore to buy a kung fu manual for the Seven Stars Mantis Fist Style just to properly research it. Sorting out all the information and adding some essential kung fu pointers that were not disclosed in the manual, he sent everything to Coward’s Savior.

Coward’s Savior remained offline for days after receiving the soft copy of Gu Fei’s custom made guidebook for Seven Stars Mantis

Fist Style. He got online one time, but it was only to tell Gu Fei that he was training hard at home!

Gu Fei thought that such an attitude was very admirable as it showed that Coward's Savior was a true kung fu lover. He promptly suggested to Coward's Savior to come over at Yunduan City so that Gu Fei could personally guide him in his training.

At that time, Coward's Savior was so absorbed into honing his Mantis Fist Style in reality that he was not even willing to waste three hours to travel from Yueye City to Yunduan City. Thus, he temporarily put the matter on hold. And yet, Gu Fei just learned from Will-low that Coward's Savior had arrived at Yunduan City. He must have reached some obstacles in his self-training so he was now seeking Gu Fei's guidance.

"He seems to be looking for you," Will-low continued saying.

"Yeah, I know," Gu Fei nodded his head in affirmation.

"What is it about?" Will-low asked.

"Is nosiness a common trait among women?" Gu Fei laughingly asked.

Will-low felt slightly embarrassed, as she blushingly said, "I am just curious!"

Since it was not some kind of secret, Gu Fei did not hide it from her, "You can come and join us in kung fu discussions!"

"Kung fu?" Will-low asked, confused.

"Mantis Fist Style!" Gu Fei gestured with his hands and posed in a mantis-like stance. He then glanced over at Will-low, only to see that she was gazing at him as if he was an idiot.

Argh! A gaze like this is just too familiar, Gu Fei sighed to himself. He said aloud, "You may not believe this, but I know kung fu."

"Oh, no wonder you are so powerful!" Will-low had a sudden

realization.

“You believe me just like that?” Gu Fei asked, shocked.

“You are so good at PvP, so I have no choice but to believe you!” Will-low said. She then requested, “Teach me as well!”

“You are interested, too?” Gu Fei asked.

Will-low nodded her head, “There’s no downside to learning kung fu, right?”

“It can make you sturdier...” Gu Fei inspected her body structure as he answered. Too skinny... I keep having this weird urge to grab her and snap her in half! It was not the first time that Gu Fei thought like this when he saw Will-low.

Describing a lady using the word ‘sturdy’ was obviously a bit improper, so Will-low naturally started to feel a little scared of Gu Fei’s words.

Gu Fei was also quick to react to the situation. Will-low will probably only use kung fu inside the game, so there shan’t be any effect on strengthening the physical body... He immediately laughed and said, “I am just joking! Let’s research it together when there’s time in the future.”

Will-low heaved a sigh of relief and nodded her head.

The bunch of people went along the route that they had taken yesterday and arrived at the level 50 grinding map. Parallel World might have various cities, but the monsters in all the grinding maps were more or less the same. After eyeing the surroundings, Drifting immediately recognized that they had arrived at a level 50 grinding map. He was stunned, “The monsters here are at level 50. Are we really going to grind on such high level monsters?”

He had long finished appraising the ladies of Amethyst Rebirth. With the ladies’ pitiful levels and equipment, they were definitely incapable of clashing with monsters beyond their levels. As for Thousand Miles Drunk... Although Drifting was unsure of his

sword's features, he was certain that this fellow should not be able to contribute a high damage output since he was an all-Agility Mage.

He was still pondering on this when Gu Fei came over and laughingly said, "You're the number one Mage, yet you can't deal with monsters ten levels higher?"

Drifting finally had some idea of what was going on now. Seems like they've only chosen to grind on these high level monsters because of me. Although they didn't say it aloud, they actually have such high regards for my capability! Drifting could not help but feel a little proud of himself right now. He was actually not a vain person. But seeing how the ladies were more interested in Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool instead of fawning over a first-rate player like him just now, a little void had been formed in his heart.

When there was void inside people's hearts, some slight delusion was necessary to fill the emptiness within, just like what Drifting was doing right now. He had deluded himself into thinking that he was the reason that this party of people had chose to level grind on these level 50 monsters. Feeling really good with himself, he thumped his chest and said, "You have me in your party now! Just feast your eyes on what happens next!"

Chapter 126 - Blossoming Crimson Lotus

The high-spirited Mage, Drifting, began to take charge of the grinding party. After observing the surroundings and the respawn rate of the monsters in this map, he quickly commanded Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool to start luring the monsters and designated the ladies to stand in certain positions.

Fortunately, the ladies were well aware of their strength and thoroughly followed this expert's instructions to them without a complaint, question, or outright disobedience. Each of them was in fact very meek.

Luo Luo was still busying her hands with showering Heal upon Heal on to Gu Fei while all of these things were happening around them.

Gu Fei stared at Luo Luo expressionlessly. Luo Luo stared back at Gu Fei with eyes that withheld all sorts of meaning.

Oh, how deceptively blue the sky was, as a flock of birds' monotonous cawing mockingly echoed in the air on their way to the south—"Get into your positions, everyone!" Drifting shouted, incidentally disrupting this 'complicated' scene.

Gu Fei suddenly felt flustered. Drifting actually places dates before his mates! Drifting only arranged the ladies' positions and actually left out Gu Fei's. Gu Fei quickly ran all the way to Drifting and stood right beside him, "Drifting bro, what about me? Where should I stand?" Although Gu Fei liked to engage with the monsters head on, he could not just do as he pleased in a Mage-based grinding party. Since that was the case, he could only copy the ladies' action and cast Descending Wheel of Flames whenever possible.

Drifting glanced at Gu Fei, "Is there a need for you to stand still with your high movement speed, Miles? It's not as if the monsters can catch up to you...."

“Oh....”

“Why don’t you help lure some monsters, too? With more people doing the monster luring, the respawn of the monsters will be much faster!” Drifting flashed him a bright smile.

“Got it,” Gu Fei readily agreed as he was not the sort of person to avoid difficult tasks. In fact, he found it more interesting to lure the monsters than to stand still and numbly cast spells. Although Gu Fei had been trying his hardest to treat spell-casting as another form of kung fu training for hidden weapons, hidden weapons that dealt wide-range of damage were honestly impossible to find in reality. Thus, Gu Fei was actually not much interested in AOE spells – a way of thinking that vastly differed from the usual Mages.

Finally, everything was set up as per Drifting’s instructions. Gu Fei and Will-low were in charge of luring the monsters from the east, Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool were in charge of luring the monsters from the south, and the majority of the ladies, who were standing in two neat rows, were in charge of attacking the lured monsters at the northwest corner. Drifting, meanwhile, would be responsible for overseeing everything at the very corner of their grinding formation.

“Let’s begin!” Drifting commanded.

The four players in charge of luring the monsters headed toward their allocated regions, each with a different style of doing the job.

Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool’s monster luring techniques were superb and their coordination was awe-inspiring. It was clear that they were born to do this sort of job, swiftly and easily causing a train of monsters to trail behind them from the south.

Gu Fei and Will-low were a sharp contrast to the two’s level of expertise. There was hardly any coordination between the pair and Will-low clearly had never experienced joining a grinding party of

Mages before based on her rudimentary monster-luring skill. Adding the fact that the monsters were ten levels above hers, Will-low could not help but run too fast in panic. This resulted into three out of the four monsters she had lured to lose track of her in the process and into her getting trapped by the monsters instead when she turned back to gather them anew.

Gu Fei was left speechless when he saw that this person who was supposed to be luring the monsters got lured by the monsters, instead. He hurriedly brought his train of monsters by Will-low's side, rescuing Will-low from the encirclement by throwing a few balls of fire to pull the monsters off of her.

When the two finally brought the monsters back to the party, Gu Fei had more or less maintained his train of monsters while Will-low only had one monster trailing behind her, appearing no better than a one-man tractor.

Everyone felt awkward to mention this fact; even Will-low blushed crimson as she stuck her tongue out to Gu Fei in embarrassment.

"Get ready, ladies! The trains are arriving into the station," Drifting called out. The ladies nodded their heads as each raised their staves and called upon a mess of Descending Wheel of Flames.

Drifting raised his head to look and cried out in shock, "Oh, my god!" Gu Fei, who had already completed his task of pulling the monsters, was leisurely watching the scene unfold before him by the side when he happened to take in Drifting's bitter look. Gu Fei's heart leaped in happiness as he muttered to himself, "Kid, now you know what 'true power' is!"

Up in the sky, the scattered, fiery circles appeared like a sequence of Olympic rings as they danced with the wind.

If the ladies knew where to cast their spells, they would direct the spells to the same place with 100% accuracy. Right now, without a

specific place to target, their flame wheels hovered in the air in a disorganized way that somewhat overlapped with one another. Drifting of course did not expect the ladies to cast Descending Wheel of Flames with great accuracy, but for them to form such a unique shape with the combined flame wheels was definitely a sight to behold.

He had trained with some noobs before, but he had never done so with many of them together! Drifting was disheartened by what he saw, calling down his final “Descend” command with a sob.

“Descend!” the ladies cried out as killing intent radiated from them.

The flame wheels dove straight to the ground and, just as Gu Fei had expected, failed to clear off any of the monsters. Drifting had also expected this wave of attacks to not work after seeing the Olympic rings.

Gu Fei’s Spell Damage that was beyond his level and precise control that had been honed by his twenty years of kung fu training with hidden weapons managed to salvage yesterday’s situation with his Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno spell. As for Drifting, how would his spell salvage the present situation?

Gu Fei realized that Drifting’s monster luring strategy was slightly more complicated than his luring strategy yesterday. With four people luring the monsters, the amount of monsters lured increased by a fold compared to that of yesterday. Thus, with that wave of flame wheels, a larger number of monsters headed toward the spell-casters.

Gu Fei was just about to intervene upon seeing that not doing anything would make the situation worse, yet Drifting unexpectedly beat him to a punch as the latter had already stepped right into the midst of the mob of monsters in two large strides.

Gu Fei bewilderedly gulped back the incantation that that was on the tip of his tongue. If Gu Fei released his spell into the mob of

mobsters, Drifting would most likely be burned off together with them. Just what was he thinking? Gu Fei became anxious.

The ladies turned into a flustered mess when they realized that the monsters were rushing toward them.

At this moment, Drifting, who was within the mob of monsters, raised his staff and bellowed, “Blossoming Crimson Lotus! Expand!” A huge boom rang out. This was the sound cue that the game designers had designated for when a raging fire got ignited. A column of flame bloomed from within Drifting and layers of fire rolled off of him in waves. The surrounding monsters were engulfed by this undulating conflagration, burning up each of them until not even ashes remained behind.

Gu Fei was shocked by the scene that that had just unfolded before him despite his disinterest in AOE spells. The spell was just too powerful! However, what was even more amazing was Drifting fearlessly standing in the midst of everything. Parallel World did not grant immunity from friendly fire to players and this included the players’ own spells. This meant that if players casted Descending Wheel of Flames upon themselves, the ensuing flame wheels that would land would deal damage to them just like how they would to monsters or to other individuals.

Drifting was right at the heart of the blazing red lotus, so how would he survive it? Did he sacrifice himself in order to save everyone? Gu Fei was still pondering on this when the mass of monsters was burned to a crisp and the floral flame was extinguished. There stood Drifting in his original position, with his robe fluttering in the warm exhaust of the flame residue and his magic staff’s incandescence dimming in the wake of the spell.

Everyone was stunned for a good half minute; Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool looked each other in the eye with a prideful expression on their faces.

The ladies finally reacted as they cheered, “Wow! That was so

pretty!”

Drifting was shocked as a crestfallen look flashed over him.

Gu Fei could not help but sigh sympathetically. From time to time, experts would experience this sort of loneliness that came from being around people who were ignorant of their prowess, which was truly the case with this lot of girls. Drifting, my boy, just accept your fate!

“What spell is that?” asked the ladies who had surrounded Drifting.

“It’s a spell that comes with my staff,” Drifting absent-mindedly replied. Being revered by a crowd was something he dearly wished, so he was a bit upset when that did not happen before. Now that he was finally getting what he wanted, Drifting actually felt preoccupied as he was squeezed by the ladies. His gaze landed squarely on to Gu Fei who was standing just outside the crowd.

Gu Fei had one hand on the sword planted to the ground, while the other was flashing a thumbs-up to Drifting. Drifting smiled slightly as he nodded his head as a form of reply. They resumed their grinding right after this incident.

The solution Drifting came up with to manage the ladies’ Olympic rings of Descending Wheel of Flames was actually the same one Royal God Call had come up with: drew a circle to the ground.

Now that there was a specific place to target their spells, none of the ladies would messily throw them out any longer. Although the problem with the ladies was resolved, the difficulty for the people luring the monsters had risen with such an arrangement. Furthermore, since two groups were in charge of luring the monsters, luring the monsters into the circle together was quite a headache.

Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool were able to display

their expertise now. With a considerate tone, they said to Gu Fei and Will-low, “Just concentrate on luring the monsters on to your side. We’ll coordinate with your rhythm on this matter.”

“Thanks,” Gu Fei said in appreciation. When it came to luring monsters, it was more important to have gaming knowledge rather than knowing kung fu. Thus, in this aspect, Gu Fei was just like any average players with no exceptional skill to boast about.

When the level grinding resumed, Gu Fei and Will-low did their best to lure the monsters and Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool carefully observed the pair while skillfully luring the monsters over at their side. Taking a turn and staggering their pacing, they finally matched up to Gu Fei and Will-low’s monster luring pace and approached the two with their respective train of monsters.

With a command from Drifting, many flame wheels crashed into the monsters inside that marked circle. At the same time, Drifting and Gu Fei casted Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno.

Seeing that Drifting was able to insta-kill many players with an AOE spell in the tavern and given the fact that he did not equip the powerful Yew Staff on himself and wanted to trade it with others instead, he clearly possessed monstrous Spell Damage.

The neatly stacked Descending Wheels of Flames from the ladies with Drifting’s Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno cleanly killed off all the monsters that that had entered the drawn circle.

Everyone cheered once more. With the method now secured, grinding could finally continue at a steady pace. “Miles, you don’t have to eat any fruits today!” some of the ladies playfully teased Gu Fei.

“Anyone would get tired of eating those all the time,” Gu Fei riposted.

“Don’t worry; I’ll let you eat my Heal,” Luo Luo said as she

bestowed Heal on to him.

Gu Fei emotionlessly stared at Luo Luo. Luo Luo stared back at Gu Fei with eyes that withheld a myriad of meaning.

Oh, how blue the sky was, as a flock of mystical creatures flew toward the south....

The level grinding proceeded without a hitch, with the ladies passionately awaiting more performances from Drifting's Blossoming Crimson Lotus.

Drifting did not provide much information with regard to that spell. Although the gossipmongers were scorching inside with questions, they still had the common sense of online gamers and did not pester Drifting about it upon seeing that he was trying to keep it a secret.

Nonetheless, everyone more or less discovered quite a few things about the spell after laying eyes on it. It seemed that the spell had no specific AOE. Just like the Ring of Fire spell, the Blossoming Crimson Lotus spell used the character as its core to unfold from. This explained why Drifting was able to stand at the heart of the spell and not suffer any damage.

Besides that, from that first time that it was used, the spell can be said to have extremely tyrannical Spell Damage. That staff of his might perhaps be some top-grade equipment just like my Moonlit Nightfalls, Gu Fei deduced in his mind. However, since Drifting was at level 41, only four people in the entire server of Parallel World would be able to appraise his equipment. As such, no one knew if Drifting had any other equipment that increased his Spell Damage.

No further incident happened afterward and the ladies ended today's level grinding session in a happy note. This was something that Gu Fei found surprising, as he felt that Royal God Call should have cried for help in English at least once today! Did that kid actually get lucky enough to acquire easy 'Bounty Mission' targets

consecutively?

Upon asking Royal God Call directly, it was truly as Gu Fei had thought. Ever since that black-capped Warrior at the tavern, the missions Royal God Call had acquired afterward were all very easy to handle.

“How many times?” Gu Fei asked.

“Fifteen times so far,” Royal God Call replied, feeling very pleased with himself. This level of efficiency was indeed shocking. Gu Fei reckoned that the Windchaser Emblem’s instant submission effect and every minute update of the coordinates had saved Royal God Call at least two thirds of the usual time.

“Seems like it is smooth sailing for you now; you better pray that you don’t pick up a target with only a minute left of his or her PK-value duration!” Gu Fei said.

“Are you dumb? I’ll just find players with more than 2 PK points! The rewards are better and there’s no fear of the time issue you mentioned,” Royal God Call immediately mocked Gu Fei for his mistake, considering how rare it was for Royal God Call to have an opportunity to do so.

“Do you still want my help?” Sadly, Gu Fei had something he could use against Royal God Call as well.

“Big bro, I’m sorely mistaken...” It was evident that Royal God Call still needed him.

“Alright, I’m about to log off; you should do the same, too!” Gu Fei admonished.

“Log what off? Let’s just pull an all-nighter!” Royal God Call spiritedly said. Gu Fei did not bother to reply to him. G*d d*mn! I even gotta deal with people’s attitude despite my difficult time questing; how annoying! The expert, Royal God Call, had quite some pent-up grievances in his heart. The grievances were not mostly about Gu Fei but more about the unfairness he felt for

himself. He was a famous top-rate gamer in the online gaming community, yet when he had actually gotten a quest for himself, he could not even handle it on his own. Royal God Call could only feel sorry for himself, which was a far cry from his glorious past self, as he shot his sixteenth target of the day. “Come online earlier tomorrow!” that was the message he had sent to Gu Fei in the end.

“I’ll try my best,” Gu Fei replied to him; he was bidding farewell to Drifting and the others over by his side as well.

Whereas Gu Fei and the Amethyst Rebirth’ ladies were about to log off, players like Drifting would still devote themselves into the game to maintain their positions as top rankers. Just like how Royal God Call would continuously play without discerning night from day and vice versa, these people’s gaming schedule could also not be measured using normal human beings’ standard.

The three were very shocked when they heard that the others no longer wished to continue grinding, telling them that they still wished to continue grinding and the ladies and Gu Fei could take their leave first.

“Will you still be grinding with us tomorrow?” Gu Fei asked Drifting. With him around, Gu Fei no longer had to cast spells, thereby making things much easier for him. Since he was sick of constantly eating apples already, Gu Fei feared that he would also get sick of eating pears, peaches, and bananas if he continued to do everything by himself. There were only so many types of common fruits in reality and it would be far too depressing if he ended up hating them because of playing Parallel World.

“We’ll keep in touch tomorrow!” Drifting said.

“Until then,” After adding him to his friends list, Gu Fei bade them farewell. Drifting watched him walk off toward the city.

“Let’s go!” Left Hand of Love and Right Hand of Cool called Drifting over.

“There’s more to that Thousand Miles Drunk,” Drifting commented.

“What?” the two asked for him to explain his comment further.

“Although he hasn’t shown it, his Spell Damage is actually very high,” Drifting continued.

“How do you know that?” Left Hand of Love asked.

“Do you recall the party’s first attempt at monster luring? That mess of Descending Wheel of Flames only hurt most of the monsters once or twice,” Drifting explained.

“Yeah, I remember that. It’s fortunate that you used Blossoming Crimson Lotus to resolve that predicament. Otherwise, those ladies would be in big trouble,” Left Hand of Love agreed.

“That’s right. The monsters headed toward the ladies since they attracted the monsters’ aggro with their spells, but I noticed that the monsters that Thousand Miles Drunk had lured did not change their target and continued to chase after him,” Drifting continued.

“So what?” Left Hand of Love asked.

“Idiot. That means that the monsters’ aggro was still on him! He used his Fireball spell to pull those monsters and bring them over. Even when the ladies’ Descending Wheel of Flames hit those monsters, he still held the monsters’ aggro. Think. How high is the damage output of his Fireball spell to accomplish that?”

Left Hand of Love finally comprehended everything and exclaimed, “Can it be as high as yours?”

“I don’t know. It’s too bad that that party of ladies’ Spell Damage is really low. They would probably die back then if I didn’t step forward in time. If not, I could’ve checked the damage output of Miles’ Fireball spell,” Drifting said in a disappointed tone of voice.

“How can his damage output be as high as yours? Won’t that mean that his equipment is even more insane than yours, given

how his speed is of someone with a full-Agility build?” Right Hand of Cool was an Archer, so he had pretty good judgment when it came to the Agility stat and movement speed of a character.

Drifting said, “If the problem does not lie with his sword, then it probably lies with his robe. I’ve tried appraising him several times, yet those two items just couldn’t be appraised.”

The two men behind him nodded their heads.

“Let’s take a look around this grinding map and search for an area that doesn’t have monsters resistant to fire magic; this way, I can gauge how powerful his spell’s damage output is,” Drifting told the two as he made his way toward another area within the grinding map.

Chapter 127 - How is this possible

Gu Fei and the ladies made their way back to Yunduan City. Upon reaching the tavern by the east gate, all were about to say goodbye to one another when someone suggested that they had a couple of drinks inside the establishment first.

“I’m gonna log off first,” Will-low bade everyone goodbye, looking visibly burned out. Luring monsters ten levels higher than hers for hours was truly a difficult task for Will-low who wore common-grade equipment and had average gaming skills. Nonetheless, Will-low once again displayed the very same determination that she had previously shown when facing Vast Lushness by not complaining even once during their party’s level grinding. Although Will-low could sometimes only pull one monster, she still determinedly performed her task.

Once she got back to the city, the tiredness that she had been ignoring assailed her full force. Her figure visibly swayed side to side as she waddled onward.

“Are you sure you can manage?” Gu Fei called after Will-low as the ladies rushed forward to support her. Her skinny figure walking down the street like loose flotsam set adrift in the sea was too pitiful a sight that no words could aptly describe it.

“I’m okay!” Will-low waved her hand to reassure them, saying, “I don’t need anyone to hold on to me.” Just as these words slipped past her lips, her body that was feebly staggering forward nearly toppled to the right. The ladies screamingly watched Will-low shoot her hand toward a wall on the right to regain her equilibrium and turn her head around to feebly smile at them, “I’ll use the wall for support.”

No one knew if she had pushed too hard, but as she moved forward while using the wall for support, her energy-drained body suddenly strongly veered to the left. Her left side only had empty

space in it. Fortunately, Gu Fei arrived beside Will-low in time to catch her falling body. He then helped her stand upright once more.

All the ladies quickly gathered around the two, thoughtlessly asking Will-low what the matter was in their panic.

“It’s nothing. I’m just feeling a little bit tired,” Will-low softly answered.

I have to log off, too. I’ll accompany you to the safe zone,” Gu Fei offered.

Will-low knew that she would probably be found lying in a ditch like a corpse if she insisted on walking by herself further, so she reluctantly accepted Gu Fei’s offer, “Alright.”

“I’m going as well!” Gu Fei bade the ladies farewell.

“Be careful,” Luo Luo said as she bestowed yet another Heal on to Gu Fei.

M*th*r*f*ck*r! Gu Fei cursed in his heart, silently expressing his vexation.

Despite his Mage body’s inherently weak Strength, he found it easy to support Will-low on their way to a safe zone. This was because her skinny frame barely weighed a thing.

Gu Fei was truly very unlucky. He had spent days and nights roaming the city in hopes of encountering highwaymen and such, yet it was only now, when he did not want them around, that they chose to appear before him.

After walking for two streets, the log-off point finally appeared just ahead of Gu Fei and Will-low. It was at this moment that they bumped into a group. It was the group of the black-capped Warrior and his six companions.

This coincidental meeting stunned both parties for a good while until one of the black-capped Warrior’s companions recovered

himself and shouted, “That’s him!”

The seven men instantly dispersed; the Archer and Mage went to the rear of their group, the Knight began to bless his friends’ stats, the Thief entered Stealth, and the Fighter and Warrior began to close in on Gu Fei and Will-low. Eyeing them, Gu Fei suddenly realized that the seven men had coincidentally taken up the seven different job classes – the legendary Calabash Brothers finally appeared!

“Where’s that Mage friend of yours?!” someone among them hollered this question. Evidently, they were still feeling enraged that Drifting had insta-killed the five of them last time. Whereas the black-capped Warrior who had been shot to death by Royal God Call only had to spend two hours in prison, the rest of them that that had died from PvP lost a level each. The experience points that the six had lost with their deaths were not something that they could recover by grinding for just two hours.

“My friend here isn’t feeling well, so I’ll help her get to the log-off point first. I’ll come back to settle the matter between us after,” Gu Fei seriously addressed the seven men that that had just finished setting up their PvP formation.

The seven swept their gazes over at Will-low and saw that she indeed could barely stand on her feet. Some revealed hesitation, yet black-capped Warrior ruthlessly said, “That’s okay. We’ll help you get to the spawn point fast. By dying, that is. You two can go there without needing to walk, so treat this as us doing you a favor!”

The other six thought that this statement was an excellent excuse, so their previous hesitation instantly vanished.

“Get him!” the black-capped Warrior shouted. He took the lead by darting toward Gu Fei.

Gu Fei did not expect the Calabash Brothers to instantly start a fight right after saying that they would. This straightforward

attitude of theirs could definitely let them accomplish big things. Many ambitious and heroic men would often hesitate and second-guess themselves at the decisive moments, allowing their opponents to counterattack or turn the tables on them.

Currently, however, Gu Fei saw them as nothing but a few pesky flies that needed to be swatted. Although Gu Fei wanted to fight with the six men back at the tavern, he did not intend to kill them off. PvP did not equate to a fight to the death, after all. It was similar to how one-on-one matches over grinding maps qualified as PvP despite them stopping short before any of the representatives got killed. Gu Fei also had this thought and only wanted to play around with them earlier. Drifting's three-man team intervening and audaciously killing the six men was truly outside his expectation. When he recalled what had happened a while ago, Gu Fei could not help but feel somewhat sorry for the six.

If Gu Fei encountered the six at another time, he would probably treat them with leniency. The current circumstance was different, however. Gu Fei resolved to deal with the opposing party rather ruthlessly after seeing how the Archer and Fighter had the nerve to strike first at the worn out Will-low instead of coming at him. Not wanting to implicate the innocent Will-low any further, he hurriedly pulled her to the side to dodge the attacks.

It was one thing for him to carry Will-low down the street, it was another thing entirely for him to evade attacks with her in tow. Unfortunately, Gu Fei and Will-low failed to dodge fast enough, so although the Archer's arrow missed Will-low, the Fighter's punch managed to strike her side.

Will-low endured the blow without making a sound and told Gu Fei to not worry about her. Gritting her teeth, she drew out a dagger. Her fighting spirit was still raring to go!

Gu Fei felt relieved when he heard the black-capped Warrior suddenly say, "Don't attack that woman." Just as he was about to thank the Warrior for his leniency, the latter continued his words,

“That woman would serve as a great handicap for him. We’ll deal with her after killing him.”

“Despicable!” Gu Fei felt utter contempt for the black-capped Warrior, causing his resolve to deal with them mercilessly to become firmer. After telling Will-low to “Hang in there!” he drew his sword from his dimensional pocket and weaved his way toward the black-capped Warrior.

These men had experienced Gu Fei’s speed before. Seeing Gu Fei close in on him, the black-capped Warrior did not try to move out of the way and instead chose to stick his sword out to unleash Cyclone. Unfortunately for the Warrior, Gu Fei was much more dexterous with his hands. A sword imbued with Twin Incineration arrived by the black-capped Warrior before he could start his Cyclone.

“You’re a Mage?!” the black-capped Warrior asked, shocked. He only learned of Gu Fei’s job class after hearing him chant. His surprise was only up to that, however. With his Cyclone about to commence, the black-capped Warrior wholly disregarded Gu Fei’s Twin Incineration. Unexpectedly, he felt a sense of fatigue accompanied by a burning sensation overcome him as he was engulfed by Twin Incineration.

“How is this possible?!” He had already been transported to the Warrior Encampment by the time he finished uttering his question.

When he was still the target of Royal God Call’s ‘Bounty Mission’ earlier, he could still withstand a Snipe and Double Shot before succumbing to Homing Projectile, so he found it inconceivable right now that just one mage spell could insta-kill him.

Gu Fei would probably find this matter unbelievable as well if he were still a newbie in this game. After all, Twin Incineration had low damage output.

As he had been playing Parallel World for over a month, he of

course had long realized the source of his attack's abnormally high damage output. His Twin Incineration's locus would swing out a flame arc using the medium he had used to cast the spell; the entire arc would then become Twin Incineration. Since Gu Fei was using Moonlit Nightfalls to unleash this spell, the arc would be created using his sword. If the blade connected with the target, the damage dealt would not just come from the Twin Incineration spell but also from Moonlit Nightfalls itself.

This was not a problem that any average Mages would notice. Besides the fact that Mages rarely used Twin Incineration, the physical damage caused by magic staves was negligible.

Gu Fei was truly an anomaly among the Mages as his weapon of choice was a sword like Moonlit Nightfalls instead of a magic staff.

Moonlit Nightfalls' Physical Damage was actually monstrously high, and it was only due to Gu Fei's low Sword Aptitude that the weapon's maximum damage could not be unleashed.

Luring monsters, gathering them into a group, and casting an AOE spell on the monsters were not how Gu Fei usually grinded. When he solo grinded, he always depended on his kung fu's sword style to fight monsters at close range.

At present, Gu Fei would engage opponents by incorporating Twin Incineration into his sword style. He treated this move as a way to boost the attack power of his sword style.

If Gu Fei's proficiency in most spells was much lower than the average Mages, then Twin Incineration would be the one spell in which he would have a higher proficiency compared to most Mages.

The damage of spells would naturally rise when the proficiency for them rose. When Gu Fei grinded his way from level 31 to 39, he noted a visible increase to the Physical Damage that his Moonlit Nightfalls could deal. This meant that his Sword Aptitude was also on the rise as he gained additional points for his stats with his

every level up. Of course, adding points toward Agility could also have a certain relation to his Sword Aptitude, but that possibility was still uncertain.

Whatever the case might be, Twin Incineration was indubitably Gu Fei's strongest move at present. Insta-killing any job classes was therefore not a problem for him.

The six men were stupefied upon seeing the black-capped Warrior get insta-killed. Nonetheless, they did not retreat with just that as they still held numerical superiority. They were currently thinking how their dead comrade should not have enraged Gu Fei by shouting out to remind them to keep the lady alive so that she could be a handicap to him. The shout caused their target to let go of the lady and go straight for the black-capped Warrior's jugular instead.

With such a thought, the Fighter among them once more charged toward Will-low. He intended to let her become Gu Fei's burden again.

"Fireball! Shoot!" Gu Fei hurled a ball of fire at the Fighter while he bounded toward the Knight.

Hearing Gu Fei summon out Fireball, the Fighter turned around and saw a ball of fire heading his way minus the spell-caster. He laughed inside him as he thought that Gu Fei had targeted the wrong person in his panic. The Fighter then ignored the ball of fire flying his way.

When searing heat overwhelmed his body next, he bewilderedly searched for the pain's origin. "How is this possible?!" The Fighter had already been transported to the Fighters' Dojo by the time he finished uttering this question.

Could one Fireball actually be packing so much power?! The Fighter was no longer seeking the answer to this question. Instead, he was now wondering about how Fireball hit him even though he did not see Gu Fei aiming the spell at him just now.

Far away, Gu Fei was laughing mirthlessly. Naturally, a little advanced calculation was in order for him to hit a moving target....

Since Gu Fei considered the Fireball spell as something like the hidden weapons that were commonly used during kung fu spars, he fired it off using the kung fu method for hurtling those hidden weapons. In reality, properly hitting someone with a hidden weapon was hard, as aiming correctly with his eyes and adjusting the proper force in his arms were required for a hidden weapon to successfully hit a target. In Parallel World, he did not need to waste effort into doing all that, since the game's system itself would do the general targeting as long as he directed the ball of fire at a target beforehand. Gu Fei only had to note the movement speed of the target and the ball of fire before aiming at a point where both would most likely meet.

This was the knowledge people needed to have in order for them to hit a moving target with their hidden weapons.

The only regrettable thing in this game was the slow flying speed of Fireball. Dodging the spell was easy as long as a target was conscious of it. Fortunately, no one would consciously dodge it, as none suspected that the Fireball spell could be used the way Gu Fei had just used it. Since Fireball could track its target, most people would shoot it directly at their targets. In fact, it was a beginner spell that people usually used to interrupt others' attacks, so who would actually use Fireball as a killing move? Gu Fei would, apparently.

The newly revived Fighter at his job class' spawn point simply could not wrap his head around what had just happened. He finally chalked it all up to coincidence, with him accidentally running into the ball of fire's flight path and bumping into it.

At this very moment, Gu Fei already made it to his third target: the Knight.

Knight and Priest were essentially support job classes. Knights

had a higher fighting capability than Priests. But since both job classes had yet to gain any strong attack skills, they could not make any impact when it came to PvP.

Meanwhile, Gu Fei already dispatched two of his seven opponents, displaying the powerful impact he had in this current PvP.

Although the Knight promptly retreated, the faster Gu Fei was still able to launch an attack on him from three meters away. Raising the sword in his hand, Gu Fei stabbed it in the direction of the Knight.

“What’s going on?” the Knight mumbled to himself. He’s clearly three meters away from me, so how could his sword reach me from this distance? What sort of move is this? His heart trembled, thinking that he was about to get insta-killed.

The answer arrived very quickly.

Three meters away from the Knight, a Thief slowly appeared where Gu Fei had plunged his sword into.

“How is this possible?!” The Thief managed to voice out his disbelief at the actual PvP scene this time.

In their previous skirmish back at the tavern, the Thief assumed that he had accidentally bumped into something inside the crowded establishment, which canceled his Stealth and inadvertently allowed Gu Fei to see and launch a kick at him. Right now, they were in a wide, empty street, so how did this person penetrate his Stealth?

Regrettably, Gu Fei did not provide the Thief much time to think as he closed in on him while yelling, “Ring of Fire! Release!”

Gu Fei casted and dismissed the Ring of Fire spell in mere moments. Touching the Thief ever so slightly, the short-lived flame orb managed to make the Thief disappear along with it.

Using Twin Incineration would be much more efficient, but Gu

Fei's assault on the group was so fast that the spell had yet to finish its cool-down period.

Assuming that he was next in line to be killed by Gu Fei, the Knight readied himself to surrender. Unexpectedly, Gu Fei pointed his blade's tip toward the Mage and Archer by the far end of the road that was still within his attacking range. "Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!" he chanted.

These two with long-range job classes did not even manage to hit Gu Fei a while ago, and now they could only stand from afar and watch as their three comrades got eliminated by Gu Fei. Just as they were about to nock another arrow and cast another spell, Gu Fei had unexpectedly casted Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno toward their direction.

The Mage wanted to persist with his casting, yet he was slower than Gu Fei by a word. Hearing Gu Fei finish his incantation, the two pointlessly pranced around as they waited for the flames' emergence beneath their feet. Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno was a spell that rose from the ground, and there was a rumor stating that the damage received from it would get reduced if the players pranced about while within its AOE.

Gu Fei shifted his attention away from the two as he darted toward Will-low who was swaying here and there. She looked as if she was about to bump on to a wall once more. Like before, Gu Fei managed to catch her falling body in the nick of time.

"F*ck! That liar didn't actually cast a spell!" The Archer Mage started to make a run for it when they saw that no flames were rising from the ground. They looked back after running for a short distance and what should have been a street filled with raging inferno was instead tranquil and fire-free. Moreover, Gu Fei was already beside the girl and was supporting her upright.

After getting some distance away, they stopped running to ready up an arrow and chant the spell once more. Just then, the Archer

and Mage suddenly felt searing heat from beneath their feet. Looking down, they saw the flames that steadily grew in ferocity had suddenly burgeoned from the ground. This was indeed the Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno spell.

“How is this possible?!” The two shrieked as they flew toward their respective respawn points.

“Idiots! Of course, I’ll always calculate my attacks in advance when dealing with moving targets,” Gu Fei mumbled to himself as he propped Will-low up beside him. He asked, “How are you doing?”

“I’m fine... Kung fu’s really amazing, I wanna learn it...” Will-low said in a soft voice.

“You’ll have the chance,” Gu Fei smiled. His gaze went toward the remaining two players: the Knight and the Priest.

The two’s hearts thumped as they each took a step backward.

“We’re in a hurry, so we’re gonna leave first,” Gu Fei nodded his head toward the two as he carried Will-low off step by step. Their figures disappeared after taking a turning in a corner further down the road.

“How is this possible?!” the Knight and Priest asked as they looked at each other, only finding their voices just then.

“Are we not killing those two?” Will-low asked Gu Fei.

“Nope,” Gu Fei nodded his head, “They didn’t attack us.”

“Oh...” Will-low answered. That was actually not a valid reason since Knights and Priests would not be the ones attacking when there was a PvP. Thus, suspicion lingered in her gaze.

“Uhm. Actually, we’re about to head to the Priest Academy to log off. If I kill him, he may hinder us once he respawns,” Gu Fei explained.

“You’re afraid of a Priest blocking you?” Will-low asked,

surprised.

“Okay, fine! I admit it!” Gu Fei could no longer stand her probing. He sheepishly whispered into Will-low’s ear, “I ran out of mana....”

Will-low was speechless once she heard the real reason.

“Rest up well!” Gu Fei told Will-low once they arrived at the log-off point and prepared to get offline.

The next day, Royal God Call’s moaning was the first thing that greeted him when Gu Fei got online: “You’re finally here, big bro. I’ve waited for you so long till my heart is now in pieces.”

Gu Fei waved his hand grandly, “Go pick up your ‘Bounty Mission’!”

“Okay!” Royal God Call happily went to the Quest Assignment Hub to obtain a new ‘Bounty Mission’.

Gu Fei limbered up and looked at his friends list. His newly added friend, Drifting, was indeed a gaming expert, as he was still online even now. Gu Fei wondered when such a talented gamer like him would get offline.

Gu Fei greeted Drifting and asked if his team was going to grind levels together with them like yesterday.

“We’re starting now? That’s a lot earlier than yesterday!” Drifting was in shock. As an experienced expert, he naturally realized that Gu Fei, Luo Luo, and the rest of the ladies would only grind at a specific time. These so-called white-collar gamers would usually have a set time in which they would grind daily.

“No. Not yet.” Seeing that Luo Luo, Will-low, and Ice Glaze were not online yet, he asked, “It should be around 7 P.M. or so. Are you guys coming, then?”

“Of course, we are. We found a good place where the grinding efficiency would surely be higher,” Drifting offered.

What an expert indeed, Gu Fei sighed in admiration. Despite being a foreign player and arriving in Yunduan City not too long ago, Drifting still managed to find an amazing grinding spot.

“I’ll see you later, then,” Gu Fei replied.

“See you later.”

After setting a time and place, Gu Fei decided to walk down the street in a carefree way as he had nothing to do at the moment. He was hoping to run into some trouble once more.

Reality remained the same for him, though. When he needed something, it never appeared. Gu Fei wandered all over the city, from the east streets to the west streets and from the south streets to the north streets. He even wandered around the trading main street and the four trading side streets, which were crowded with people. Unfortunately, not one person rushed to Gu Fei with a blade in hand, so he left despondently.

Just as he got bored of walking around and looked for a place to rest, Royal God Call sent him message. “HELP!” Royal God Call called out in English again.

Gu Fei was elated. There would surely be a fight when Royal God Call called out. He quickly replied, “Where is it? Is the target a man or a woman? How many people around? How arrogant and how evil is this person?”

Royal God Call replied, “I have yet to see the target.”

“What?” Gu Fei asked, perplexed.

“This person’s raving mad. The coordinates that are updated every minute indicate that the target never stops moving inside the city. I have no idea where he or she is going. I’ve been chasing the target but I’ve yet to see him or her even now. I reckon I got near this person’s coordinates twice. But this person’s moving so fast that he or she might even be faster than me! Lend me your boots for a while. Else, I can’t catch up to the target,” Royal God

Call explained in length.

“Oh. Where are you?”

They set up a meeting spot. Gu Fei arrived first. After waiting for two minutes, Royal God Call suddenly sent a message, “Mhm. This noob doesn’t seem to be moving anymore.”

“Is that so? Guess I’m not needed anymore? I’m leaving, then.”

“Go ahead!” In truth, Royal God Call felt somewhat embarrassed to bother Gu Fei like so. A good blade should only be used with a good handle; meaning, Gu Fei should only be asked to help resolve difficulties only at the most crucial moments.

Unexpectedly, the new coordinates that that had refreshed in the next minute were a different set once more. Royal God Call controlled himself and observed everything for a few more minutes, and the coordinates once again began to become erratic and unpredictable.

Royal God Call felt absolutely helpless right now, so he could only send another call for help toward Gu Fei.

“I’ll wait for you to come over and take my boots.” Gu Fei felt pissed as well, offering, “I can help you slay that person, too.”

With the location set once more, Gu Fei was the first to reach the location again. Two minutes later, Royal God Call discovered that the coordinates had refreshed at the same spot twice. He began to realize that something was not quite right.

When he got to the place, he raised his head and looked. He then blinked his eyes rapidly as he felt like fainting.

Gu Fei quickly stepped toward Royal God Call and passed the Windchaser’s Boots over. He said, “Take it.”

Royal God Call expressionlessly said, “You should commit suicide!”

“What?”

“I said you should commit suicide!” Royal God Call repeated himself.

“What are you talking about?!”

Royal God Call finally let the cat out of the bag, “Oh, g*dd*mn you – you PK maniac! Killing people left and right when you’re bored. Did you not slay five people yesterday?”

“How did you know?” Gu Fei asked, blinking his eyes.

“Fugitive 31548; PK value: 5 points. F*ck! Yunduan City’s number one PKer is always you! Big bro, I beg of you, find something new to do! Can’t you give others a chance? Stop occupying that spot!” Royal God Call was in tears as he pleaded.

Gu Fei finally understood what was happening and he laughed in amusement, “You got me?”

“Yup. You’ve already said you will help me slay the target. Go ahead and commit suicide!” Royal God Call exclaimed in frustration.

“Calm down, young man!” Gu Fei patted Royal God Call’s head.

“At this rate, when will I be able to consecutively complete a hundred ‘Bounty Mission’! I’ve already lost quite a lot of experience points over these past two days bounty hunting; now, I gotta start all over again!” Royal God Call groaned.

“I said calm down!” Gu Fei told him, adding, “Wait until my PK value drops to 1 point, and then send me to jail!”

“What?!” Royal God Call asked, shocked. He never imagined that Gu Fei would be willing to sacrifice himself like this.

“Isn’t it just two hours? That’s no big deal,” Gu Fei said generously.

“That’s....”

“It’s settled, then,” Gu Fei patted him. He said, “Pass me that emblem and I’ll drop my PK value down to 1 point.”

Royal God Call stiffly passed Gu Fei back his emblem.

“Follow me and you just might learn something!” Gu Fei said. Killing two ‘Bounty Mission’ targets was easy for him, after all.

Royal God Call glanced at the time, “Aren’t you and the girls about to begin grinding?”

Gu Fei looked at his friends list. The names of all the ladies were already lit, indicating that they were all online.

“Go ahead! Your PK value will be 1 point by the time your level grinding ends,” Royal God Call said. Gu Fei was already a big help to him, so how could Royal God Call shamelessly say something like: “Don’t go grinding. Keep on killing targets till you reach 1 PK point, so I can send you directly to jail”? Proposing something like that was truly awkward. Even if Gu Fei himself thought of doing such thing, Royal God Call would definitely be compelled to stop him. Therefore, he urged Gu Fei to grind levels.

“Mhm-mhm. So wait for me till then!” Gu Fei also felt that it was inappropriate for him to not show up after making arrangements to grind levels with Drifting.

“Wait!” Royal God Call suddenly cried out, saying, “Won’t this mean that I will have nothing to do? I’ll come along with you, then!”

“Oh, that’s cool,” Gu Fei nodded his head.

Chapter 128 - Discontented

Luo Luo and the ladies began to call for them, so Gu Fei and Royal God Call unhurriedly made their way to the location.

Gu Fei was truly doing Royal God Call a big favor this time. The latter did not know how to express the feeling of gratitude welling up inside him, so their conversation along the way was somewhat awkward.

“Relax, Royal,” Gu Fei assured Royal God Call and the latter nodded his head.

They chatted until they arrived at the tavern by the east gate. Standing right by its entrance, Luo Luo, Drifting, and the rest waved to Gu Fei.

Luo Luo expressed her surprise, “It’s not like you to be so proactive, Miles! Arriving so early!” With that, she bestowed Heal on to him.

“Can you change things up a little?” Gu Fei asked dryly.

“Other skills will waste my mana,” Luo Luo smilingly replied. Turning her gaze on to Royal God Call, she exclaimed, “Lil’ bro Royal is here, too!” She then bestowed Heal on to him as well.

Royal God Call’s reaction was a far cry from Gu Fei’s, as he said with a face showing bliss, “Mhm-mhm. I’m here also, Big Sis Luo Luo.”

Gu Fei was on the verge of vomiting. This kid was far too degenerate; everyone in the mercenary group was older than him, yet he had always been blatantly ignoring the age issues and acting like he was on equal footing with everyone. Yet here he was, acting his real age and submitting himself as the youngster of the group. The m*th*r f*ck*r even had the nerve to say ‘big sis’ so naturally.

“Royal?” Drifting asked. He froze in place upon hearing the name.

Gu Fei affirmed by saying to Drifting, “This is Royal God Call.” Addressing Royal God Call next, he said, “They are Drifting, Left Hand of Love, and Right Hand of Cool.”

The two’s eyes met.

Under normal circumstances, the two parties that were introduced would say, “How do you do?”, or at least smile at each other; instead, Drifting and Royal God Call checked each other out from head to toe. Their expressions changed unpredictably, vacillating between love and hate.

Gu Fei was about to ask if the two knew each other when Royal God Call pulled out his bow and said straight away, “Drifting, let’s have a deathmatch!”

Gu Fei and Luo Luo gawked at the two men. Meanwhile, Drifting rubbed his temple and laughed despite the situation, “You’re indeed a child!” He then turned to face the others and said, “Come, there’s still time. Let me treat everyone to a drink or two.”

“What’s going on?” Gu Fei asked Luo Luo as they followed Drifting’s three-man party into the tavern.

A slight breeze wafted through the street, causing a tumbleweed to roll past Royal God Call’s pants. “F*ck me!” The ignored Royal God Call cursed as he barged inside the tavern after them. When he got inside the tavern with his bow in hand, the five were already seated. Royal God Call’s face turned ashen.

“Do you two know each other?” Gu Fei and Luo Luo stood on the same side this one time as they were curious about the issue at hand.

Drifting nodded his head, “We’ve played together before, many games ago...” The way he said this had a tinge of longing in it! Seeing the tension between two when they met just then and Royal God Call’s immediate reaction of reaching for his weapon to demand a deathmatch, it seemed that they had quite the

unpleasant experience playing together. Gu Fei thought that this made sense. Drifting was a Mage Expert, while Royal God Call was a Mage before Parallel World. Players in the online gaming sphere were always competing with each other to be first or for fame in their respective job classes. There was a good chance that the relationship of these two men was of the similar vein.

Royal God Call reached their table at the moment when Drifting was ordering from the NPC bartender, “Get me five glasses of liquor.” Drifting then looked at Royal God Call with an arched eyebrow, asking, “Shall I get you a cup of juice?”

He was evidently mocking Royal God Call’s age; Gu Fei and Luo Luo looked at each other and smiled.

“I’ll kill you!” Royal God Call was incensed by the question.

“Sigh... I was just kidding. Don’t be so immature and sit down,” Drifting thought nothing of his threat.

Royal God Call did not give up his original intention and made a huge ruckus right in the tavern about wanting to fight Drifting to the death.

“Calm down, calm down...” In the end, it was Gu Fei who persuaded him to stay cool. If this happened before, Gu Fei’s words would not do any good. Now that Royal God Call felt indebted to Gu Fei and had no way of repaying him, why would he not give face to Gu Fei and heed his words? Only then did Royal God Call step down.

Drifting did not expect this. Having played with Royal God Call in various MMOs, even though he never got to meet him in person before, he could easily tell what sort of temper Royal God Call had.

Drifting knew that Royal God Call was not a person who would calm down after a few words from just anyone. Just who was this Thousand Miles Drunk? Drifting paid more attention to Gu Fei, incidentally ignoring Royal God Call’s existence once more.

Royal God Call became enraged again... Gu Fei barely contained Royal God Call due to the latter giving him face. Gu Fei knew they could only redirect Royal God Call's attention away from the matter through the ladies.

Luo Luo seemed to also think so as she ruffled Royal God Call's head like a big sister and asked, "What games did you guys play before?"

Royal God Call named a few games that were once popular on the gaming market.

"You guys must have fought a lot, yeah?" Luo Luo smilingly asked.

"Hmph." Royal God Call turned his nose up the air, saying, "I fought. Some people just got beat up." His tone showed his disdain for Drifting.

Drifting actually went along with what he said, "Yeah. I got beaten up every day and abused so badly...."

Everyone could hear the sarcasm in his voice. These two men actually disdained each other, except that they attacked each other differently. Royal God Call directly goaded Drifting into a fight, while Drifting indirectly fought back by using Royal God Call's words against him. In fact, with just a few words, he succeeded in making Royal God Call more incensed. He seemed to have a deep understanding of Royal God Call's temper.

Gu Fei could not tell what had happened between the two just from their snide remarks and odd tones. He reckoned that if he wanted to find out more about this particular matter, he would have to ask Brother Assist to get the full story.

The rest of the ladies trickled into the tavern as Drifting and Royal God Call continued to drink their glasses while expressing their mutual discontentment with each other. Royal God Call seemed to have a rather close relationship with many of the ladies

as they had much to chat about after not having met for two days.

Since Drifting only grinded with their party yesterday, the ladies merely exchanged a few words with him.

Royal God Call felt pissed with Drifting without a way of releasing it; realizing that he held the upper hand in this particular area, his face began to show enjoyment of the situation.

“Everyone’s here, let’s go!” Although many experts were in their party now, Luo Luo was still its leader. She barely had any use as the party’s Priest these two days besides her periodical use of Heal to tease Gu Fei.

“Hmm. I found a grinding area that is far more suitable for us to grind than the one yesterday,” Drifting began to speak as the party stepped out of the city limits.

“Oh, is that so? Let’s go take a look!” Luo Luo said excitedly. The ladies cheered in agreement as well.

Gu Fei felt that something was off with this. Why did Royal God Call not butt in a few lines to this suggestion? That was hardly like him, considering the personality he had shown thus far.

Looking around for Royal God Call’s figure, the sight that he saw gave him a fright. The kid purposely lagged behind the party to arch his bow and was about to take aim! Naturally, there was no need to mention who he was aiming at here. Gu Fei boldly stepped in and blocked the path of his arrow.

Royal God Call hurriedly waved at him, indicating for him to move aside. Gu Fei was amused and peeved at the same time. Darting right in front of Royal God Call’s bow, he pushed it down and exclaimed, “What are you doing?!”

“I’m taking him out!” Royal God Call answered indignantly.

“Stop this craziness. He’s now a member of our grinding party,” Gu Fei said.

“Kill him. We need to kill him. Haven’t you heard of the saying: ‘Fear not a god-like opponent but a pig-like teammate’? This sort of teammate must be killed off,” Royal God Call strongly insisted.

Hearing that, Gu Fei looked toward the lot of the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies and a small part of him wished to cast Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno upon all their feet. This was not just one pig-like teammate; it was a whole group of them. “Alright. Stop messing around. You’re an expert. This bunch of ladies is watching you, so you should act the part,” Gu Fei evidently also had a pretty good grasp of Royal God Call’s personality, as his speech visibly moved the latter.

A lady realized that their party was lacking the two members of Young Master’s Elite mercenary group, so she turned her head back and shouted, “What are you two doing? Hurry up!”

Royal God Call deftly put his bow back into his dimensional pocket as he waved toward that lady, “Coming!” He then said to Gu Fei, “Let’s go, let’s go! I’ll find another opportunity to finish him off.”

Gu Fei had no words left for Royal God Call.

Chatting merrily, the party arrived at the grinding spot Drifting had located. Everyone looked at the monsters around them and did not notice any big difference between them and the monsters that they grinded on yesterday. They were clearly still at level 50.

“You are all grinding on higher level monsters?!” It was Royal God Call that reacted. When he was leading the ladies to grind, he had only brought them to the level 40 grinding maps. He felt he was a top-class expert whenever he beat other opponents into submission once their party was challenged for their grinding spot. But now that Drifting had joined the party, the first thing they did was move to a level 50 grinding map to grind on high level monsters. It was clear who had the upper hand in their rivalry.

While Royal God Call’s ego was feeling wounded at this

revelation, Drifting was addressing everyone, “Yesterday, I pulled an all-nighter and tried out all the level 50 grinding areas in this map. The monsters in this area have the lowest fire resistance, so it should make our grinding much easier.”

“We were able to kill those monsters from before, so why do we need to fight these monsters that have lower fire resistance?” The ladies each expressed their uncertainty. They might have average gaming skills, but they were not idiots.

Drifting answered, “It’s better to be safe than sorry! Over where we were, if anyone accidentally missed their cast, it could result in a failure to kill the pack. Here, it would be easier and safer!”

All the ladies were still somewhat doubtful. On his end, Drifting thought that this reaction was odd. With their poor control of all the casted Descending Wheel of Flames, shouldn’t they understand how legitimate my worry is? Why are they still in doubt?

Drifting naturally did not know that even though the ladies had poor technique and accuracy, they had been using that same method with Royal God Call for close to a month already. If they were still unable to aim well like that, then they were not just pig-like teammates; they were just pigs.

Whatever the case might be, this matter was not worth thinking about too much. After all, it did not matter where they grinded as long as they could still kill the monsters. The ladies carried on with their plan and prepared to begin their daily grind even though they still had doubts on why Drifting did that.

“Miles, I’ll leave the monster luring over at this side to you today,” Drifting said. Will-low must have been very exhausted from yesterday’s session since she did not come online today.

Gu Fei nodded his head. Will-low was only able to lure one monster at one pull anyway, so losing her was not very debilitating to the process.

“Same as the last time, everyone. Ready yourselves!” Drifting smiled slightly as he issued this final instruction.

“Wait!” Royal God Call suddenly jumped. “Luring the monsters is it? Miles, take a rest. Let me do this...” He finally found a way to repay the favor.

Chapter 129 - Who's behind that tree

“Let me do this...” Gu Fei refused to hand over his duty to Royal God Call despite the latter’s top-notch monster luring skill, as Gu Fei could only contribute by casting spells alongside the ladies if Royal God Call took over his task; would that not be boring and lacking thrill?

However, Royal God Call was so eager for a chance to repay Gu Fei that he insisted on being the one to lure monsters. Although Gu Fei kept on saying that he loved luring monsters, Royal God Call merely thought that his words were said out of courtesy.

Meanwhile, Drifting was feeling really nervous that the two were fighting over the right to lure monsters. He had stayed up the whole of last night checking the various level 50 monsters of Yunduan City from one corner to another before finally finding a place where he could calculate Gu Fei’s Spell Damage. Thus, he could not help but feel irate that Royal God Call had come out of nowhere and looked to be about to spoil his plans. “Stop fighting, you two. Just go and lure monsters together.” Drifting came up with to what he thought was an acceptable compromise; his goal of determining Gu Fei’s Spell Damage could be attained as long as the latter was able to lure monsters.

This suggestion would have easily been accepted by Royal God Call had it not come from Drifting’s mouth. As such, Royal God Call pursed his lips and threw him a steely look, “Are you trying to say that I can’t do it alone? Do you think that I don’t know how to play as an Archer?”

“Of course not,” Drifting answered hurriedly. Honest to god, Drifting did not intend to ridicule Royal God Call right now.

Sadly, that was how Royal God Call had taken his suggestion and he angrily shouted at Gu Fei, “Miles, let me do this. I’ll do all the monster luring over here!”

Gu Fei was helpless and could only step down while smiling wryly at Drifting.

Drifting was so annoyed that he nearly vomited blood. He thoroughly regretted having suggested the compromise as he only ended up riling Royal God Call to such a degree of foolhardiness. Even the wisest man could make mistakes occasionally.

Fortunately, there were still plenty of opportunities in the future; he refused to believe that Royal God Call would be able to follow them to grind levels every day. There would surely come a time in the future that he would discover Gu Fei's Spell Damage. With that thought in mind, Drifting was relieved enough to smile again, "Then, let us begin!"

Grinding at this spot was indeed much easier than yesterday's location. Even without Gu Fei's or Drifting's assistance, the ladies could beat the monsters to near death through their concerted efforts. Sometimes, someone would even luckily deal their highest damage, cleanly insta-killing the lured monsters.

Gu Fei threw some spells for quite a few waves and quickly became bored. I don't even feel as if it matters if I'm here or not! Furthermore, he found it extremely vexing that he had to eat fruit after every four waves of monsters due to his low mana. The currently bored Gu Fei saw Luo Luo get to his side and warily asked her, "What?"

"Look how stressed out you are just from me getting near you," Luo Luo smiled as she raised her hand to bestow Heal on to him. Gu Fei extended his hand and pushed her hand down, "Don't waste that on me. Use it to someone who needs it the most—"

"You're holding my hand," Luo Luo interrupted.

Gu Fei smiled as he kept holding her hand. He did not feel the slightest embarrassed that he had purposefully pressed her hand down to stop her from bestowing Heal on him. What was a little physical contact between men and women nowadays? Only those

with ill-intention would mind such a superficial action.

Luo Luo's smile slightly wavered. She was about to say something when Gu Fei suddenly shouted, "Who's there?!"

"What?" Luo Luo looked at her back and saw no one there.

"There's someone behind that tree," Gu Fei said as he pointed to a spot. He then started walking toward the area he had just indicated. With how things were currently, his departure barely affected the grinding of the party.

Luo Luo trailed her eyes to where Gu Fei had pointed and saw a lone tree a few meters away.

"I don't see anyone," Luo Luo muttered to herself as she followed him over. She too felt that her participation in the party's level grinding did not matter much. Originally, fighting monsters ten levels above them should be a dangerous task, such as Will-low needing Luo Luo's constant Heal to survive the level grinding yesterday. But since the ones pulling the monsters today were gaming experts and had long-range job classes, Luo Luo could only blankly watch them without needing to use her skills. Feeling bored, she decided to tease Gu Fei for a bit but she got stopped by him in the end. It was all because she was 'bored'.

The others looked on as the two headed toward a tree with Luo Luo following behind Gu Fei. Very quickly, they all retracted their gazes from the two with a knowing smile on their faces and feigned ignorance of what had just occurred.

"Wait for me!" Luo Luo shouted.

Gu Fei stopped walking and asked, "What are you doing here?"

"What if it's dangerous?" Luo Luo asked back instead.

"That's precisely why I'm asking you what you're doing here," Gu Fei reemphasized his previous question. Danger lurked everywhere in the game, and Yunduan City was no exception. A majority of people in Yunduan City had heard stories of the evil-

doers that would ‘farm’ solo players’ equipment, so most players now grinded in parties rather than by themselves in order to ward off these evil men.

“I’m coming with you to heal you!” Luo Luo smiled as she said this.

Gu Fei was helpless and just let her be. He slowed down his pace to match Luo Luo’s as they made their way around the tree. They spotted half the back of a person’s figure prone on the base of the tree. Seeing the person’s figure and shoulder-length hair, it seemed that the person was a she.

Ah. So what I actually saw just then was this person dropping on the ground, Gu Fei muttered to himself as Luo Luo bent over. Tapping the person’s shoulder lightly, she asked, “Hello?” She took a quick look at the person’s face and turned her head to Gu Fei, “This lady’s a beauty. Your eyes sure are quite sharp.”

Gu Fei did not respond to her teasing.

“Hey, what’s wrong? Please wake up!” Luo Luo became anxious when the beauty remained motionless after getting tapped by her. Holding the lady’s shoulders, Luo Luo gave them a few firm shakes.

Gu Fei could clearly see the lady’s features now that her face was turned toward him and he immediately froze.

Vast Lushness. She was the demoness who was responsible for the hardships of countless players in Yueye City in the past. In addition, she was the one that had forced Will-low and her friends to leave their home city.

When Gu Fei and the rest of Young Master’s Elite mercenary group left Yueye City, the all out war between the behemoth Past Deeds Guild and the allied small guilds had only just begun. He did not even bother to find out how things had turned out in Yueye City ever since his departure. A month had passed since then. Vast

Lushness' sudden appearance here made Gu Fei wonder how the large-scale guild war had turned out.

Vast Lushness finally opened her eyes after experiencing Luo Luo's violent shaking. Her glazed over eyes slowly regained their awareness as she sat up while looking at them, "You two are...." "Were you... sleeping?" Luo Luo asked in disbelief; she actually mistakenly thought that something serious had befallen the lady.

Vast Lushness nodded her head, "It has been forever since I last logged off. I only wanted to rest for a bit behind this tree, but I accidentally fell asleep instead."

"What are you doing here?" Luo Luo asked, perplexed.

"I'm looking for Yunduan City. Is this near Yunduan City? Are you Yunduan City's players? That's great! I finally met other players," Vast Lushness happily picked herself up. She was talking to Luo Luo at first, but her gaze instinctively shifted to Gu Fei when she said 'players'. Her gaze did not shift after that as it stayed on Gu Fei for the longest time.

Black mask, black mage robes, and a purple blade gleaming with dark luster... The image was burned deeply into Vast Lushness' mind.

However, Gu Fei was not wearing a mask right now. He also kept Moonlit Nightfalls into his dimensional pocket when he realized that it was her. Vast Lushness could not identify him solely from the robe alone; black mage robes were no longer as rare as before, after all.

Gu Fei had yet to make a sound and only Luo Luo spoke to her, "You wish to head to Yunduan City?"

Vast Lushness finally switched her gaze from Gu Fei to Luo Luo as she nodded her head in affirmation, "Yup. I'm from Yueye City, so I don't know the way. I got lost after crossing the Oolong

Mountain Range. I've been running around this map for so long, but I've yet to meet anyone. I'm only at level 30 so I don't dare to wander off too far. It's a good thing that I met you two."

"Wah! You're only at level 30..." Luo Luo exclaimed, saying, "This is a level 50 grinding map!"

"Yeah, that's why I don't dare to move any further. I have to be careful with every step I take, as dying will send me back to Yueye City since I have yet to log off over at a safe zone in Yunduan City," Vast Lushness affirmed.

Currently, most players were around level 38 to 40, and those at level 30 were basically new players who had just started playing Parallel World for a few days. Vast Lushness was a veteran player when the game was still in beta. She was already at level 30 last month, yet she was still at level 30 right now; it was obvious which side had won the guild war in Yueye City. For Vast Lushness to not even be able to raise one level this entire month, it seemed that she had quite the tough time.

She was looking the part of someone who had not gone offline for so long as well, as her eyes were bloodshot and her face looked haggard. Luo Luo sympathetically tugged on her hand and said, "We're grinding our levels over there. You should join us as well. We'll bring you back to the city together later."

"Thank you so much," Vast Lushness nodded her head.

Just as she was about to tag along, a voice suddenly rang out, "Over there!"

The three looked toward the voice's origin and saw a number of players running down the hill toward them. Vast Lushness's face visibly paled as she sighed, "They found me."

"Who are they?" Luo Luo's inquisitive spirit was piqued.

"They are people of Yueye City who are hunting me... I have many enemies; our guild has been hunted constantly ever since we

lost to them. To think that they would find their way here,” Vast Lushness admitted to them.

Luo Luo stared at Gu Fei, clearly wanting him to make a decision. If they were to help Vast Lushness, Gu Fei would have to do the attacking; as a Priest, Luo Luo could not make any form of decision in this situation.

However, Gu Fei remained noncommittal regarding the situation. Answering a cry for justice was a chance he had been waiting for quite a long time, yet reality always seemed to always make fun of people, especially him, for the person Gu Fei currently needed to help was none other than Vast Lushness... This woman was not a good person, even though her current predicament was quite pitiful. That’s right! Where is her husband? Where has that guy called Silver Moon gone off to? Gu Fei was still muttering this to himself when the men from downhill arrived before them. These men wore a shocked expression upon seeing the three.

“It’s you?” one person facing them addressed Luo Luo.

Gu Fei raised his head and looked at the bounty hunters. F*ck, these men are no good either. The one in charge of this lot was the person that that had gone incognito for a while: No Smile.

Chapter 130 - Battō-jutsu

Vast Lushness was public enemy number one in Yueye City. If Past Deeds was mentioned in front of Will-low and her friends, the person they would curse and complain about would not be Guild Leader Silver Moon but his wife, Vast Lushness. If she ever came in dire straits, like right now, it was no exaggeration to say that there would be no place she could hide in Yueye City. Death was the only result awaiting her if anyone caught sight of her.

Besides, Dusky Cloud and his gang that had defeated Past Deeds were no upright heroes. It would be ludicrous if anyone thought that they had eradicated Past Deeds Guild for the sake of justice in Yueye City. Very few people were pacifists in online games. Dusky Cloud and his lot took its place when Past Deeds fell. Considering their hot-blooded nature and ‘might was right’ mentality, their resulting arrogance would definitely be no better than Vast Lushness’. Naturally, they would spare no efforts when dealing with Vast Lushness given their deep animosity toward her. This was clear enough, given how their hunt for her had spread all the way to Yunduan City.

No Smile had a really good relationship with Dusky Cloud. No Smile previously lending his precious dagger, Zephyr’s Whisper, to Dusky Cloud in this online game was already proof of the strong bond that the two shared. Dusky Cloud even tried to off Gu Fei for No Smile and, at the moment, No Smile was helping Dusky Cloud hunt for Vast Lushness. “Why are you two here?” No Smile asked first, recognizing Luo Luo and Gu Fei – of course, he recognized Gu Fei as the despicable person who had snatched his dagger away and not his nemesis, the Masked Slayer.

Luo Luo evidently cared not for No Smile so she did not bother to reply; Gu Fei was the one who spoke to No Smile, but it was not to politely answer the latter’s question; instead, he asked one of his own questions, “Why are you still alive?”

No Smile felt peeved! He was currently considering whether to kill off these two people along the way, seeing as bad blood already existed between him and July, Luo Luo, and the rest.

“Who are these two?” someone beside No Smile asked.

No Smile froze, as the question was not easy to answer. The only person related to him from the previous matter was July. Since July was considered as an ‘enemy’, then Gu Fei and Luo Luo would be the friends of his ‘enemy’, and it would be somewhat of a stretch to say that he was related to them. No need to tangle with these two since I’m just helping Dusky Cloud and his lot hunt for Vast Lushness. No Smile thought of this and casually responded, “Nothing much. I just happen to know them.”

Gu Fei and Luo Luo were quite surprised by his statement. They initially thought that No Smile would use this opportunity to punish them for what they had done before, yet No Smile apparently no longer had that in mind!

“Oh. Would you two please let us through? We’re players of Yueye City who specially made the trip out here to find this woman!” The person pointed at Vast Lushness as he spoke to them.

Luo Luo glanced at Gu Fei. Vast Lushness looked quite pathetic right now, so Luo Luo felt really sympathetic of her plight. However, Gu Fei had always been apathetic toward this woman ever since they had seen her under the tree. His current attitude was very different from Luo Luo’s impression of him that she instinctively knew that there was more to this matter, yet she did not say a thing about this and merely tugged on Gu Fei’s hand, “Shall we leave?”

Gu Fei nodded his head in agreement and took two steps back.

Luo Luo hesitated for a moment before finally saying, “Or should we stay and have a look?” Although she was no gossipmonger, she sure was nosy when it came to stuff like this.

“Fine by me,” Gu Fei easily agreed again. The two took a step back as No Smile and his team immediately surrounded Vast Lushness.

Vast Lushness was a Priest with very slow movement speed, so she did not attempt to escape when she got discovered by them. Now that she was being surrounded, she only softly said, “Just do it already; stop dragging this out.”

The men laughed coldly and said, “You’re not bad, running so far away from Yueye City. Don’t you want to see more of the local sights?” With that, one of them swung a sword toward her.

Vast Lushness tried to dodge the attack, yet she could not dodge it completely. With her much lower level than the attackers and non-combat job class, she could only take the hit while gritting her teeth and bestow Heal on herself.

“You d*mn b*tch! Looks like you want it the hard way!” The person cursed as he scored another hit with his sword.

Vast Lushness dodged again, but she was still struck by it. Once more, her Heal landed on herself.

“I’m joining in as well!” Two more men joined the fray; one was a Mage while the other was a Priest like Vast Lushness.

The Mage did not use spells, nor did the Priest use his healing spells; both waved their staves wildly as they closed in on Vast Lushness.

“Shall I join in as well?” An Archer also stepped up from the men and changed his fighting style to something inappropriate for his job class like the two before him, brandishing his longbow like it was a crescent blade.

No Smile stood to the side with a cruel smile on his face, not joining in the skirmish.

This was not a PvP but an extended session of torture, instead. Since Vast Lushness had no way of retaliating against them and

could only painstakingly bestow Heal on herself, the men were beating her up using methods that could inflict the lowest possible damage on her.

“Is this how you fight back? Why are you being so ‘gentle’?” A few of the men jeered at Vast Lushness. Describing her as ‘gentle’ happened to be ironic given her past tyrannical personality, and they laughed at this inside joke.

Luo Luo could not bear to look on anymore. As she was about to say something to Gu Fei, she saw the corner of his eyes twitch.

“Ahhh!” A scream escaped from Vast Lushness, who had been enduring all their painful attacks, when the opposing Priest swiped his staff across her legs and tripped her over.

“HA HA HA HA!” Everyone stopped their attacks as they guffawed in ridicule at Vast Lushness’ sorry appearance.

Vast Lushness quickly climbed up to her feet with her body visibly shaking from the effort. Having stayed online for such a long time, her body was now showing signs of exhaustion.

“Do you still want to do this the hard way?” The opponent berated Vast Lushness as he slashed her once more.

Heal!

“You’re still holding on!” said someone as another slash was sent her way.

Heal once more.

“You’re still at it!” The surrounding men severely chastised Vast Lushness as they continued their attacks.

The answer to their actions was yet another Heal.

“Woman, retreat to the side!” someone suddenly said loudly.

All gawked when they saw Gu Fei stride over. There were only two women here. Based on where Gu Fei was looking at, it was apparent that his statement was for Vast Lushness.

“What are you trying to do? You wanna be a hero?” No Smile laughed mirthlessly as he gripped his dagger tightly. He did not want to make the same mistake twice. I tried making things easy for these two. But since they’re insistent on serving themselves up on a silver platter, they can’t blame me for messing with them, No Smile thought to himself.

Vast Lushness looked at Gu Fei with an emotionless face, “I don’t need your help.”

“I’m not helping you; I’m helping them,” Gu Fei corrected her.

“Oh?” The lot hesitated for a while before laughing, “Bro wants to play with us, too? Go ahead.”

Gu Fei laughed as he entered the crowd and stood in front of Vast Lushness, addressing the men, “I am helping you know what a real PvP is! Twin Incineration! Incinerate!”

The Priest that that had tripped Vast Lushness disappeared under a fiery glow. “F*ck!” everyone exclaimed.

“Step aside; school’s in session,” Gu Fei bluntly told Vast Lushness.

Vast Lushness was in shock. The required Spell Damage to insta-kill a Priest with just Twin Incineration was frighteningly high. What was worse was the fact that Gu Fei casted the spell with just his bare hands.

Gu Fei actually used a weapon, but it was done so fast that she failed to see it. Gu Fei drew out Moonlit Nightfalls from his dimensional pocket, casted the spell, attacked with it, and put it back inside his pocket almost instantly. This technique of drawing out a sword for one strike and returning it to its scabbard was called ‘battō-jutsu’.

Legends had it that battō-jutsu used the resulting arc when the user drew the sword as well as the resulting friction from that action to create an instantaneous burst of power, achieving a slash

that was far stronger than an average slash. However, that was merely legends; in reality, the real profundity of using battō-jutsu came from executing it during an ambush.

A sheathed sword would naturally give the opponent a false sense of security. The one explosive attack that came from suddenly unleashing battō-jutsu would have a greater success if the opponent least expected it.

If the lethality was truly a result of the friction from drawing the sword out of its scabbard, then that would mean that the user would have to quickly sheath the sword back once the first slash was executed; otherwise, it would be impossible to perform the second strike.

In other words, swiftly sheathing the sword was more difficult than swiftly drawing the sword from its scabbard. Many Japanese warriors were obsessed with battō-jutsu and they trained the technique of drawing and sheathing their weapons for years. And yet, most of them still could not perform the sheathing part of the technique, failing to master battō-jutsu and discovering the manly [seppuku](#) technique instead. This could be considered as an oddity in the history of martial arts.

The battō-jutsu technique that Gu Fei was currently using was in fact executed using the method for using a hidden weapon. Honestly speaking, pulling out a sword from the dimensional pocket and putting it away were easier to accomplish in-game than in reality where he would have to use a scabbard.

“You rascal!” one of the men bellowed, resulting into him eating Twin Incineration from Gu Fei as well.

Six men, including No Smile, were chasing after Vast Lushness and two of them already lost their lives in Gu Fei’s hands in the blink of an eye. Thus, the remaining four men no longer bothered with Vast Lushness as it was evident that Gu Fei was the harder opponent.

No Smile's heart was currently in turmoil. He was uncertain why Amethyst Rebirth had so many top experts helping the guild. Before it was that Fugitive 27149, and now it was this person. If only No Smile knew that 'that person' and 'this person' were the same one, he would probably be sh*tting his pants right about now. Unfortunately, No Smile did not have much time to ponder on this because Gu Fei once more created another arc of Twin Incineration, instantly killing two more players that that had rushed toward him. In this instance, only No Smile and a Warrior wielding a huge axe remained standing.

"What's your level now?" Gu Fei suddenly asked No Smile.

"Level 40," No Smile answered while stepping backward.

"Your level is higher than me!" Gu Fei exclaimed, feeling spiteful.

"YA!" the axe-wielding Warrior accompanying No Smile roared as he cleaved his weapon toward Gu Fei.

Gu Fei turned his body to the side and evaded the move, "You look familiar. What's your name?"

"This m*th*rf*ck*r here is called Celestial Pig; remember the name!" Celestial Pig growled.

"Oh, got it. Bye!" Gu Fei's hands moved and insta-killed Celestial Pig.

No Small was paralyzed with fear. He no longer had the will to fight and only thought of escaping. Just as he was about to activate his Vanish skill, two arrows loudly pierced the air and embedded themselves into his forehead. White light shone for the sixth time....

Gu Fei glanced over and saw Royal God Call jumping up and down, "F*ck me! You're PvPing again!"

Seppuku – or hara-kiri, is the Japanese people's traditional method of committing suicide by disembowelment or by cutting their stomachs open.

Chapter 131 - A Controversial Figure

The party that that was originally grinding at a distance rushed toward Gu Fei and Luo Luo. The Archers Royal God Call and Right Hand of Cool were the fastest, and they arrived just in time to end the entire skirmish by activating Snipe to insta-kill No Smile.

“You killed five players again!” Royal God Call indignantly exclaimed as he pointed at Gu Fei.

“Hey, don’t casually say ‘again’,” Gu Fei chastised.

With their slower movement speed, Drifting and the ladies only arrived at this moment. They had originally seen quite a few figures from afar, yet only three people were at this location when they arrived.

“You’ve already resolved the matter?” Drifting asked Gu Fei as he looked around. He very much wanted to observe Gu Fei’s fighting techniques. On his way here, Drifting saw white lights flashing one by one. Looking at the three people at this spot, he noted that Luo Luo and the other lady were Priests and only Gu Fei as a Mage was capable of turning the enemies into white lights.

“It’s fine already; everything is over. You lot can go back to grinding!” Gu Fei clapped his hands to get their attention.

“You killed five people again,” Royal God Call mumbled bitterly. He got Gu Fei as his ‘Bounty Mission’ target, so he could check the latter’s PK value anytime.

“Just what is going on?” Given the gossiping nature of the present ladies, they would naturally not leave without knowing what had just happened in this location. Everyone kept on asking this question as they glanced over at Vast Lushness.

“Hey, aren’t you...” Royal God Call immediately recognized Vast Lushness. Although the two only met for a short period of time a month ago, Royal God Call was a scoundrel whose interest lay in

women. Given Vast Lushness' pretty looks, remembering her was very easy for him. "You're Vast Lushness of Yueye City's Past Deeds Guild!" He might have recognized her at a glance, yet it had taken him quite a while to recall her name.

"Do you know each other?" Luo Luo's eyes sparkled. Gu Fei's odd attitude toward this woman made her feel that there was something more to the matter than what was seen on the surface, and she became even more convinced of this when she saw Royal God Call's reaction toward Vast Lushness.

"And... you are?" Vast Lushness hesitantly asked as she looked directly at Royal God Call's eyes. She clearly did not recognize him anymore. Since Young Master Han introduced him back then as 'one of his four lackeys', he only left quite a limited impression on her.

"I went to Yueye City and met you before," Royal God Call explained.

"Oh..." Vast Lushness acknowledged lightly. She then turned her gaze toward Gu Fei and said, "Thank you. Yunduan City sure is a place filled with experts."

Gu Fei only smiled thinly.

Given how women were naturally closer with their fellow women, the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies immediately surrounded Vast Lushness and began to ask her all sorts of questions, such as "Why did you come to Yunduan City", and so on.

Thus, Vast Lushness summarized her situation to everyone. It was just as Gu Fei had thought; Past Deeds had gained many enemies in Yueye City, so many players supported Dusky Cloud and his gang as they fought against her guild. Silver Moon continued to use his OP skill, King's Command, that boosted his party's fighting prowess. However, those precious seconds in which he was able to dominate the PvP field were not enough to affect the ongoing war.

During Past Deeds' glorious days as the sole large guild in Yueye City, its members were indeed very arrogant and tyrannical to the other players in Yueye City. Now that the roles were reversed, these players began exacting their crazy revenges on the already meek Past Deeds Guild, killing and beating its few hundred members that had become street rats at first sight without mercy. In fact, these members would still get hounded by others even when they quit the guild altogether.

Without any choices left, some Past Deeds' members quit the game entirely. Some even began to journey far and wide to look for another city to call home. Only a handful members of the guild stubbornly stayed in Yueye City.

Vast Lushness was evidently among those stubborn members. Her situation was the worst compared to the other guild members because she was the most hated figure of the Past Deeds Guild. People in Yueye City often formed hunting parties to slay her. Grinding, drinking, and killing Vast Lushness became the three big items on some players' daily to-do list. "Have you killed Vast Lushness yet?" became a common question in Yueye City.

In such a terrible environment, Vast Lushness actually continued to survive like a cockroach, without even conceiving the thought of leaving Yueye City. Everyone was puzzled as to why she persisted like so, but Vast Lushness did reveal anything about it. As for why she was at Yunduan City, she said she was looking for someone.

"Are you looking for Silver Moon?" Royal God Call asked aloud. He actually wanted to ask about Silver Moon even earlier, yet he only recalled his name now.

Vast Lushness silently nodded her head.

Thus, the ladies began to question her anew on who was this saint-like Silver Moon. When they learned that Silver Moon and Vast Lushness were interwoven in a story of romance, sympathy

instantly poured from the ladies to her, barring actual tears from being shed. Furthermore, the turbulent and barbaric customs in Yueye City left a deep impression in these ladies. Everyone began to wonder, “Just how did June’s Rain survive in Yueye City?”

Xiaoyu had yet to return from her questing in Yueye City and only kept constant contact with the ladies of the guild through messaging. The new members of Amethyst Rebirth already knew that a glorious player of their guild had yet to return from her questing in Yueye City for over a month.

“I’ll bring you back to Yunduan City, so you can log off and rest first!” Luo Luo said to Vast Lushness. Anyone could tell how tired she was from just a glance.

“Won’t... Won’t I be troubling you?” Vast Lushness could tell that this party was here to grind levels.

“It’s no trouble,” Luo Luo smiled.

“It’s better if I take her back to the city,” Gu Fei suddenly spoke.

“You?” Luo Luo asked, surprised. Gu Fei’s treatment of Vast Lushness was cold and distant since they met. He even appeared apathetic when she told her sob story to everyone. Why would he suddenly feel compelled to do her this favor?

Could it be... Luo Luo had a sudden thought so she dragged Gu Fei to a side, “What are you doing? Are you trying to take advantage of her precarious situation?”

“What?”

“That Silver Moon that she spoke of...” Players could exchange messages with one another more easily in the game than in reality. It was possible for someone to forget their phone, for the phone to run out of charge, or similar situations that made contacting another person difficult in reality, but those unfortunate circumstances were impossible in-game. For Vast Lushness to not be able to meet or contact someone for days, it was easy to consider

the possibility of Silver Moon actively avoiding her. Everyone had this suspicion, yet not one actually mentioned it.

“F*ck! What are you thinking?” Gu Fei indignantly asked as he regarded Luo Luo derisively for a bit. He then walked toward Royal God Call and said, “I’ll go back to erase my PK value. I’ll contact you when it’s time.”

“Okay...” Royal God Call replied.

“Let’s go!” Gu Fei said to Vast Lushness, not a hint of ulterior motive could be detected from his tone of voice.

“Sorry to trouble you, then,” Vast Lushness could only accept this kindness.

“Everyone, keep on grinding. I’ll be back in a while,” Gu Fei waved to everyone. With Drifting around, it was not an issue if he was there to help out or otherwise.

As he made two steps toward the direction of Yunduan City together with Vast Lushness, Gu Fei distantly heard Royal God Call begin to tell the ladies, “That Vast Lushness...” He was most likely telling everyone about her past glorious and arrogant days in Yueye City.

Although Gu Fei proceeded toward Yunduan City at a steady gait to match Vast Lushness’ movement speed, he did not start a conversation with her. Gu Fei’s dislike for her was evident that even Vast Lushness was very aware of it. Thus, she resolved not to say anything to Gu Fei if he would not do so first.

As a result, the two arrived at Yunduan City in total silence. Gu Fei pointed to a direction and said, “That should be the nearest log-off point.”

“Thank you,” Vast Lushness said.

Gu Fei nodded his head and prepared to leave without saying goodbye.

“Hey!” Vast Lushness suddenly called after Gu Fei, halting his footsteps as he turned his head around.

“I still haven’t gotten your name,” Vast Lushness stated this fact.

“Thousand Miles Drunk,” Gu Fei said. Usually, players would take this chance to open their friends list and mutually add one another as a friend, yet Gu Fei and Vast Lushness did not do this at all.

“Thank you,” Vast Lushness thanked him once more before turning to leave.

Gu Fei stared at her departing figure for a moment before heading toward the Quest Assignment Hub to accept ‘Bounty Mission’.

Obtaining a mission and chasing a target were almost a routine to Gu Fei. There happened to be several players with 3 or 4 PK points displayed on the board. Gu Fei easily accomplished the hunt and lowered his PK value back to 1 PK point. With all that done, he left the city once more and returned to the grinding party. The ladies were still discussing about Vast Lushness when he got back! But based on the content of their conversation this time, it was evident that Royal God Call had already filled them in on her past. This caused Vast Lushness to become a controversial figure to them.

The ladies were split into two sides with regard to whether Vast Lushness deserved sympathy or not. All separated into the two sides of the main body of the grinding setup and were incessantly debating about the matter while they dropped Descending Wheel of Flames on to the monsters’ heads in the indicated circle.

Gu Fei smiled as he came up beside Luo Luo, “What’s all this?”

“Do you think Vast Lushness deserves sympathy?” Luo Luo asked.

“Nope.”

“Stand over there then!”

Gu Fei was speechless. He could not find it in himself to laugh or cry about this matter. From the number of people standing on the opposition with Gu Fei, it seemed that domineering and arrogant players were not popular among the ladies here.

Just then, Royal God Call came back from bringing a train of monsters, so Gu Fei casually asked him, “Royal, what do you think? Does that lady deserve sympathy?”

“Of course,” Royal God Call nodded his head.

“Royal is the most obedient,” Luo Luo nodded her head in satisfaction, even rolling her eyes at Gu Fei.

Royal God Call stood there with a smile on his face and acted cute in front of Luo Luo. When that was done, he made funny faces at Gu Fei and asked, “In the end, she’s still a babe. So did you manage to score with her?”

“F*ck off over to the other side,” Gu Fei cursed.

Royal God Call did not dare to offend Gu Fei so he quickly slinked off to pull more monsters.

“Drifting, what do you think of that lady?” Gu Fei asked, bored. Drifting was standing right in the corner of both sides. It was difficult to tell which side he was supporting.

“Nothing much. It’s just a game,” Drifting stated matter-of-factly, adding, “In this world, anyone with power would act the way she did.”

“Is that so? But why aren’t you like that?” Gu Fei asked.

Drifting stared at him, “I casually insta-killed five men for you in that tavern just the other day.”

Gu Fei was speechless once more. Casually insta-killing five men without even finding out about the situation was indeed an example of arrogance.

Chapter 132 - Meeting Each Other Yet Again

After watching the ladies fight a few more waves of monsters, Gu Fei beckoned Royal God Call over, “Alright. You can complete your mission!”

Royal God Call felt stunned, “Now?”

Gu Fei nodded his head.

“But the level grinding has yet to end!” Royal God Call blurted out.

“It doesn’t really matter whether I’m here or not!” Gu Fei stated bluntly.

“Actually, it’s like this,” Royal God Call came over to Gu Fei and pulled him to a side, whispering, “ You see, there are so many ladies around watching. If I kill you off right under their gazes, although you’re helping me with my ‘Bounty Mission’, I... I... I will definitely be hated by them.”

Gu Fei laughed coldly, “You’ve got quite a lot of request for this.”

“It’s just a small request...” Royal God Call pitifully pleaded.

“Forget it. I may as well go all the way with helping you; we’ll find somewhere without anyone around for you to do the deed!” Gu Fei decided.

“Thank you brother! My dearest brother!” Royal God Call emotionally cried out.

As both returned to the grinding party, Royal God Call went back to pulling monsters and Gu Fei went back to standing by the side while feeling totally bored. The nosy Luo Luo came by once more, “What were you two muttering over there all sneaky-like?”

Gu Fei glanced at her once, “Players who are sympathetic to Vast Lushness stand over there.”

“Hmph!” Luo Luo pettily rolled her eyes, viciously bestowing

Heal on to Gu Fei in retaliation before walking off in a huff.

Many people would be envious of Gu Fei being able to squat there and attain free experience points. However, the recent circumstance was far from why Gu Fei was playing this game. He cared naught about the experience points or equipment drop, as he only wanted to train his kung fu by fighting creatures that could react to his every move. If this simple wish of his could not be achieved, what was the point of even grinding like so?

Gu Fei squatted to one side while drawing circles on the ground as he groaned, attracting everyone's attention to him. They could not help but think, This b*st*rd is really hard to please. He seems dissatisfied with our current grinding efficiency.

Suddenly, Gu Fei stood up and waved to everyone, "You guys keep on grinding. I'll head over there for a while."

"Where?" everyone asked. When Gu Fei earlier said 'over there', he waved in a large circle.

"Over there!" Gu Fei circled a random area once more before turning around and running off. With his speed, his figure became a black dot in the distance very quickly.

"It's too boring. I'll go grind by myself. Call me when you're done over there," Gu Fei sent Royal God Call a message.

There were no words from him after this. Finding a spot not too far away, Gu Fei grinded on the monsters there alone. Luo Luo sent him messages from time to time to ask where he had run off to, yet Gu Fei casually found some excuse to stall her from finding him. He only returned to the party when Royal God Call messaged him that they were about to leave.

"Hi!" he cheerfully greeted everyone. After using his kung fu for a bit, Gu Fei's gloomy look from before was replaced by a happy expression now.

Everyone threw him side glances, yet he paid those no heed.

Grabbing Royal God Call, he went toward a different direction as he announced, “You people go on ahead. I still have something to settle with Royal.”

“Ah! Sis Luo Luo...” Royal God Call stared longingly at Luo Luo as she led the troop of ladies back to the city.

“Do you want the lady or the Windchaser’s Boots?” Gu Fei asked him.

Royal God Call looked visibly conflicted when Gu Fei presented this choice to him. His face was scrunched up as if he was torn between the two most difficult choices of his life. He could only stare dumbly after the ladies as they slowly got further and further away.

“Do it! I’m facing away from you, or else my conditioned reflex will react,” Gu Fei said as he turned around and faced his back to Royal God Call; he even went as far as to cover his ears with his hands. After practicing kung fu for so many years, his body had developed a reflex toward combat. He feared that if he faced an attack that he was aware of head on, he would instinctively dodge it. It was said that a conditioned reflex that did not require any thought was the fastest at reacting to an attack.

Royal God Call nocked his arrow, pulled the bow, and stared at Gu Fei. His hands were actually trembling slightly. Gu Fei was indeed true to his word, so how could Royal God Call do the deed knowing that?

He waited for quite a long while and still the arrow did not arrive. Gu Fei turned around and saw Royal God Call with his bow pulled, standing there in a daze! The dumb look on his face irked Gu Fei, “What are you hesitating for?! Quickly fire your arrow already. I need to head to prison soon since I still have class tomorrow!”

The shout shocked Royal God Call, causing him to release the arrow in his hand that flew out with a sharp whoosh. It was just as

Gu Fei had suspected; his body already reacted accordingly before the arrow even struck his forehead. Turning his body sideways, he cleanly evaded the arrow.

Royal God Call instantly got mad. He had released the arrow after much intense and nerve-wracking thought, yet Gu Fei easily dodged it.

Gu Fei helplessly said, “That’s the reflex I trained out as a kung fu practitioner. Try again!” With that, he turned around and covered his ears once more.

Royal God Call was immediately inspired by what Gu Fei had done. Nocking his bow, he shut his eyes. Indeed, his heart was much more settled now that he could not see Gu Fei. He gritted his teeth and released his arrow once more.

Royal God Call slowly opened his eyes after half a minute, only to see Gu Fei staring at him with a disgruntled expression.

“What?” Royal God Call asked, annoyed. Although his eyes were shut tightly when he fired off that arrow, he was confident that his hands had already achieved the steadiness that came from his familiarity with the various archery skills. He was therefore unlikely to miss a target that he had aimed an arrow properly.

Gu Fei expressionlessly reached his hand to his back and, after groping for a bit, pulled out an arrow shaft while gritting his teeth. He then returned the arrow to Royal God Call, saying, “Royal, my friend, please stop messing around and end it in one shot, alright?”

Royal God Call broke out in a cold sweat as he took the arrow back, “Sorry. I forgot to use my skill.”

Gu Fei did not say another word and merely pulled his sword out of his dimensional pocket. Turning around and covering his ears, he lightly warned, “If I’m not dead with your next shot, it’ll be my turn to slay you dead.”

“Relax!” Royal God Call calmed him down. As the saying went,

‘anything hard the first time around was easy the second time around.’ Having shot Gu Fei once, Royal God Call no longer felt conflicted like before. He steadily nocked his arrow and aimed. Shutting his eyes tightly, he released the arrow on Snipe.

“How was it?” Royal God Call asked aloud with his eyes still shut tightly. No one replied to his question, though. When he opened his eyes to look, Gu Fei was no longer around. Upon seeing that the ‘Bounty Mission’ on his mission log was displayed as completed, Royal God Call heaved a long sigh of relief.

Opening up his friends list, he sent a message to Gu Fei, yet the system humorously stated: [Your contact is not within a serviceable area.]

“F*ck...” Royal God Call cursed as he walked back to Yunduan City alone.

When Gu Fei received Royal God Call’s arrow on Snipe, his vision immediately darkened and, in the next moment, he found himself transported inside Yunduan City’s prison.

The underground prison was dimly lit and the air was deathly cold. In conclusion, his surroundings were hardly inviting. Looking around him, he saw that the cell he was in was quite large and had three or five other occupants. Everyone curiously glanced over at the newcomer. Some people were about to call out to him, but they ended up keeping their mouths shut upon getting a clear view of Gu Fei’s face who had just turned around.

Gu Fei looked around him and he became somewhat uncomfortable. Quite a few occupants of the surrounding cells were actually sent there by Gu Fei. In all honesty, nobody else, aside from him and Royal God Call, was actively doing ‘Bounty Mission’ in Yunduan City.

The biggest fear players had with PK value was the penalty of losing two levels if they died. It was actually not easy to die in Parallel World, as monsters in grinding maps were not exactly

difficult to take on. A player with decent equipment would be capable enough of dealing with monsters of the same level. Thus, it could be said that the chances of them dying to the monsters while grinding were a lot lower than them dying as a result of PvP.

‘Bounty Mission’ was all about engaging in PvP, so players who were not confident of their skills would not risk their lives to go through such missions. This was how Yunduan City differed from Yueye City. Players over there embraced the risk of PvP every day as part of their online gaming lives. Naturally, they would try their hardest to protect themselves by not attaining PK value in Yueye City.

It could be said that Gu Fei was the reason why many players had to while their time inside Yunduan City’s prison. Some with higher PK value had to squat there up to eight or ten hours, but not everyone had the patience to stay inside an enclosed space for such a long duration.

The game designers were kind enough to design the entire prison as a big safe zone. Thus, players could log off any time they wished, except their prison time would only get reduced when they were online.

Many players did not have the willpower to stay in this sort of dull environment. Thus, despite the time the players needed to spend inside the cell only being a few hours long, they would often log on and off daily until they finished serving their time in prison.

Among the players Gu Fei saw in front of him, two looked very familiar as he had just sent them in here earlier. Several others looked somewhat familiar; he reckoned that he must have sent them in here several days ago. Gu Fei did not recognize the rest. But since no one else currently did the ‘Bounty Mission’ in earnest, Gu Fei reckoned that these players must be Royal God Call’s ‘customers’.

Gu Fei blankly stared at these people, not knowing how to break

the ice. In the end, one of the possible ‘customers’ of Royal God Call came over and asked, “Bro, who sent you here?”

“Is it an Archer?” Someone began to describe Royal God Call’s general appearance to Gu Fei.

Gu Fei nodded his head honestly, “Yup!”

“F*ck that sh*tty twirp!” Some began to warm up a little with Gu Fei when they learned that he was sent here by Royal God Call as well.

Someone said a few consoling words to Gu Fei and pointed to the other players seated by another corner, “Those few over there, some sh*tty Mage sent them over here.”

Gu Fei wanted to cry, but no tears came out. He smiled wryly as he admitted, “That sh*tty Mage is me....”

“Ah?!” Some exclaimed in shock, quickly bolting a few meters away from Gu Fei, and others crawled over to the front of Gu Fei’s ‘customers’. After confirming Gu Fei’s identity, these guys began to stare at him with contempt in their eyes.

Gu Fei felt annoyed by all this. He was so focused on helping Royal God Call that he had overlooked this problem. These people currently gathered in this prison were the lot that had the greatest hatred toward him!

But since the entire underground prison was a safe zone, players could not make any contact that would lead to PvP. Gu Fei was not afraid of being surrounded; instead, he was depressed that he could not use his kung fu to shock everyone into submission.

That crowd of men was not the least bit afraid of him as they gathered together and whispered in low voices, expletives being uttered every so often as they talked. Gu Fei sighed. It looked like these two hours here in this cell would not be easy. Maybe he should log off and try another day?

Just as he was pondering this, a few beams of white light shone

as three players were sent in.

Chapter 133 - Endless Disdain

The three men who had just emerged from the white lights acted very differently from the other players inside the underground prison.

No one, including Gu Fei who had sacrificed himself to help Royal God Call with his 'Bounty Mission', entered the prison to serve time jovially. In contrast, these new arrivals openly expressed their excitement upon seeing that the cell had quite a lot of occupants.

At this moment, the players inside the cell were currently split into two factions. Gu Fei was the leader, as well as the sole member, of the 'depressed' faction. He was dazedly occupying the left corner of the cell while wondering whether he should log off or not. As for everyone else, they were part of the 'indignant' faction and were all standing by the right corner as they furiously regarded Gu Fei. A fight would have long broken out between the two factions had the entire prison not been designed as a safe zone.

The new arrivals saw this situation of Gu Fei being ostracized by everyone. All these prisoners barely knew each other and would mostly spend a couple of hours together here, so how did such a conflict occur in just a short duration? And yet, the current conflict seemed to be so serious that all were isolating Gu Fei.

After considering everything, the three began to move closer to the larger group first.

"Hello, fellow brothers..." The leader cheerfully greeted the lot. It was rare to see people who were jovial of being sent to prison, so the pack of players found their behavior to be somewhat odd and regarded the lot with raised eyebrows.

"Were you guys sent here by an Archer?" one of the players finally inquired.

“Ah? No. We came here of our accord,” one of the three men replied.

Everyone felt shocked. They turned themselves in... Such an occurrence was much more infrequent, as most people would rather work to rid themselves of their PK value by asking their buddies to help them accomplish ‘Bounty Mission’. This sort of honest players who would willingly turn themselves in could not be found PvPing in the first place.

The three men conversed with them for a while, before finally pointing at Gu Fei who was sitting by a corner on his own, “That guy....”

The group of convicts once more burst into an angry chatter, with some whispering to one another. Their indignation gradually became evident as their voices and swearing grew louder with each passing moment. Gu Fei could no longer bear it, so he got up from his corner and made his way to the front of the group.

“What are you trying to do,” everyone stared at Gu Fei. Although the players who had fought with him and had mostly been instakilled by him knew of Gu Fei’s fighting prowess, the fact that the deadly Gu Fei could not do anything to them inside this prison that was a big safe zone emboldened everyone.

“Say whatever you want, but don’t speak such vulgarities,” Gu Fei stood up, towering over them as he lectured the men squatting by the wall for their foul language.

“F*ck! Why do you care?” all arrogantly demanded with raised chins.

Gu Fei exasperatedly said, “I won’t care if you are speaking of others; but you’re cursing at me, right? Actually, we should be condemning that Archer together. I share the same fate with you all since I was also sent by that guy here!”

When he said that, over half the players present stirred

emotionally. They were sent to prison by an Archer, so this Mage doing 'Bounty Mission' had nothing to do with them at all. Conversely speaking, Gu Fei was indeed on the same side as them as he was sent to prison by the Archer as well. Since Royal God Call had been busying himself with the bounty hunting business these past two days, most of the cell occupants were truly Royal God Call's doing.

When Gu Fei's 'customers' saw that a majority of the people were getting convinced by Gu Fei's words, one of them quickly voiced his opposition, "Don't be fooled, everyone. They must be working together."

Gu Fei took the lead in staring at the speaker as if he was an idiot. Even the three newcomers at the side chimed in, "Working together? Why would the Archer dump him in this prison if they are indeed working together?!"

"How would I know? There must be a reason behind this!" the person insisted.

All turned their noses to this fool. Gu Fei sighed in his heart. This saying really held some truth: 'The minority was the one who always had a good grasp of the truth!'

"By the way, did you guys see what that Archer looks like? The brat actually attacked me from behind, so I didn't get a good look of his face," Gu Fei began to dissect Royal God Call, planning to utterly divert everyone's attention from the recent allegation.

His plan worked perfectly as everyone began to discuss and partake in all sorts of gossips about Royal God Call. As Gu Fei had expected, many of Royal God Call's 'customers' were sent to prison without seeing a lick of his shadow due to his fighting method. Almost all of them were taken down by Royal God Call's sneaky shots from afar, so not one actually saw his face clearly.

"How utterly despicable and shameless!" everyone criticized Royal God Call severely.

“Very true!” Gu Fei agreed as he laughed inside. His ‘customers’ could not interject anything and could only stare at Gu Fei hatefully while squatting by a corner. Gu Fei no longer bothered himself with them and turned his gaze toward the three newcomers. The prison’s lighting was slightly dim, so distinguishing the others’ looks at a certain distance was hard. Unexpectedly, Gu Fei felt stunned when he recognized one of the three, “SILVER MOON!”

Who else could the person on the left be but the guild leader of Past Deeds, Silver Moon?

The three men were originally checking Gu Fei out with a slight smile on their faces. Evidently, they were quite interested in him. While the three viewed the others inside the prison as mediocre beings that had lost in PvP, they saw Gu Fei as a talented individual who had contributed to the population inside this prison by bravely doing ‘Bounty Mission’.

As for how he got sent to this prison, the three heard everything clearly: ‘An Archer attacked him sneakily!’ Archers had an advantage when it came to PvP over Mages, so they thought it was still reasonable that Gu Fei was eliminated by an Archer no matter how strong he was, especially since it was a sneak attack that might have caught him off-guarded.

Unexpectedly, this Mage that the three were interested in actually knew Silver Moon.

“You’re...” Silver Moon hesitated. Many people knew him, as he was a guild leader, but that was in Yueye City. It totally did not make sense for Yunduan City’s players to recognize him – unless, they were from Yueye City.

Gu Fei promptly got a hold of his emotions and he schooled his facial expression into a neutral one, saying, “I once went to Yueye City in the past. I heard and even saw you at the time.”

“Oh!” The three were visibly relieved by this.

Silver Moon was even pleased with himself, This proves that we are so well-known that even those from other cities visit Yueye City just to see us. Furthermore, some remember us to the point of recognizing us at a glance despite barely meeting us. As he relished in this thought, his impression of Gu Fei deepened by quite a lot. “Bro—” Just as he was about to ask Gu Fei’s name, he discovered that the Mage had squatted down once more with the rest of the trashy players to deride the Archer that they all despised.

Silver Moon felt somewhat shocked. Why is this guy’s interest in this bunch of commoners stronger than his interest in an important person like me? With this thought in mind, Silver Moon joined the crowd of squatting players and addressed them, “Gentlemen, what’s the name of that Archer who bullied you? Since we met by fate in this place, I will take it upon myself to avenge you all when I get out.” With that, he smiled cheerily at Gu Fei.

What are you smiling at me for, you f*ck*r?! Can’t you see that I don’t wanna associate myself with you? Gu Fei thought to himself as he shifted to the side by half a step. He felt as if someone wanted to get closer to him while he was taking a dump in a latrine pit... It was downright disgusting!

Meanwhile, Silver Moon mistook Gu Fei’s action as him being afraid that the space was too cramped for Silver Moon, so the latter kindly gave the former more space. Silver Moon was instantly delighted by this as he glanced at everyone emotionally, awaiting their reply to his suggestion.

“Who are you?” Someone suddenly sank the spirits of Silver Moon with this seemingly innocent question, causing Gu Fei to sputter as he stifled his laughter.

Everyone curiously stared at him, not understanding what Gu Fei found so funny. Gu Fei quickly recovered himself and introduced the arrogant prick to everyone, “Silver Moon here came from Yueye City. Have you guys heard of the Past Deeds Guild?”

“Oh...” everyone chorused.

Silver Moon. That person was almost as famous as Close Combat Mage 27149 who had single-handedly cut down No Smile eight times. However, while the source of Close Combat Mage’s fame lay in his PvP prowess, Silver Moon’s fame lay in his OP equipment.

The story of the protracted guild war in Yueye City had long spread on the forums. The players of Parallel World were engaged in a verbal war on the forums as they wantonly discussed and analyzed Silver Moon’s equipment. It was rumored that he had a top-grade sword that could bolster the stats of his teammates, turning them into monstrously strong PvPers. The skill was dubbed by others as ‘City of Golden Armor’.

This topic had been debated for the longest time; it was only when Past Deeds was entirely eradicated that the interest for the OP equipment of Silver Moon waned and gradually disappeared. Silver Moon did not make any earth-shaking move after his guild collapsed, and rumors had it that he was on the run. It seemed that this was truly the case; otherwise, why would he be in Yunduan City’s prison with them?

Everyone’s “Oh” echoed for quite some time as they each entered a contemplative state for quite a while. Silver Moon was very ecstatic by their protracted “Oh”, as he thought that he had brought everyone toward a new high. Silver Moon gazed at everyone with a satisfied expression on his face as he recalled his past glory.

While everyone was smiling on the surface, all of them were thinking inside, “F*ck! He’s just a dog without a leash, yet he’s acting as if he’s an unparalleled existence!”

Silver Moon felt proud of himself despite leading a losing army because he still considered himself as an expert who left a lasting impression on others. However, no rule saying that experts should be spared from ignominy existed. Currently, Silver Moon was an

expert being disdained by the surrounding players. Looking at his gorgeous equipment, they could only sigh, At least, this guy is handsomely attired!

Since Silver Moon did not know what the others were thinking right now, he even added, “I am currently in the midst of forming a mercenary group. Since we are now acquainted, I can help you guys get revenge and I won’t even collect fees from you all.”

Everyone felt ecstatic upon hearing that someone was willing to be their ‘punisher’ for free and began to enthusiastically describe Royal God Call to Silver Moon. Gu Fei listened by the side and provided input from time to time. In the end, Royal God Call turned out to be a tall, chubby individual who wore gaudy equipment; his heels never touched the ground when he walked and his eyes overflowed with wretched intent.

Gu Fei had no words to say if Silver Moon still found Royal God Call with such a ‘helpful’ description from him, as that would be heavens’ will. If that is really the will of heavens, you’re better off giving up, Royal!

During their animated discussion, the ignored ‘customers’ of Gu Fei coldly interrupted, “Big bro Silver Moon, shan’t you help avenge us for our grudge as well?”

“Of cour...” Silver Moon began to unconsciously accept their request when he stopped. Aren’t they the ones bearing a grudge against this Mage? He took a liking to the Mage Gu Fei who instantly recognized him, so Silver Moon swallowed the last word on the tip of his tongue. With that, he put on righteous expression on his face as he said, “We’ve all become acquainted through fate. This... Your request.... It’s truly awkward to perform.”

With that, he smiled at Gu Fei once more. Evidently, he said that to pull Gu Fei to his side. The men snorted and did not say another word. Silver Moon felt this exchange made him and the Mage closer, so he boldly moved nearer Gu Fei and asked, “Brother,

what's your name?"

"Thousand Miles Drunk," Gu Fei replied.

"When did you visit Yueye City? I don't seem to recall seeing you!" Silver Moon asked.

"Long ago. Since you are quite the 'big deal', you probably won't recall meeting a nobody like me." As Gu Fei said this aloud, he thought to himself, You are someone I've defeated before, and it's not even worth mentioning. Do you know that this big bro right here has killed you twice?

Silver Moon nodded his head and continued, "So that's how it is. Now that I'm here in Yunduan City to play, I'm developing a mercenary group. Brother, I wonder if you're interested in joining my group?"

"Sorry, but I'm already in one," Gu Fei rejected him outright.

"Oh, which mercenary group would this be?" Silver Moon asked.

"Uhm. Our idiotic leader doesn't allow us to casually reveal our group's name to others. He said it's to maintain an air of mystery," Gu Fei fabricated. He did not know if Silver Moon was aware that Young Master's Elite mercenary group was the catalyst for the Past Deeds' fall from grace, but their identities would easily be found out once the three lay eyes on the other members. Young Master Han's and Sword Demon's unique appearance would be a dead giveaway, since none of them bothered to cover their faces during their participation in the guild war.

As for calling Young Master Han idiotic, that was simply a cathartic remark that Gu Fei often attached to the man's name whenever he thought of him. And yet, Silver Moon mistook his 'idiotic leader' comment as Gu Fei expressing his dissatisfaction toward his mercenary group, so he sighed sympathetically, "To actually have such a rule. How odd, indeed!"

Gu Fei merely smiled and did not pursue the subject, resulting in

their conversation to end abruptly. A ‘customer’ of Royal God Call came over and interjected, “Big bro Silver Moon, what’s your level now? We can’t appraise it at all!”

Silver Moon laughed complacently, “Level 40.”

Gu Fei felt shocked upon hearing his answer and he quickly used his Appraisal skill on Silver Moon as well. His Appraisal indeed failed. Although his Appraisal skill’s rank was not high, it could still view some equipment information about his target provided that the player had the same or lower level than him. Gu Fei’s Appraisal failing could only mean that Silver Moon’s level was higher than his. He truly was at level 40!

Having the ability to maintain his level despite the tumultuous PvP in Yueye City, everyone saw Silver Moon in a different light than before. However, Gu Fei knew that things were not as simple as that. Players who had never been to Yueye City would never know the deep grudge existing between the two forces. After the fall of Past Deeds, Vast Lushness got hunted for a whole month and was only at level 30, so how did Silver Moon reach level 40? Was it possible for Dusky Cloud and his gang to treat him favorably?

Thinking of this, Gu Fei probed, “Oh, right. I remember that you’ve got a wife. What’s her name again? It’s a pretty long na—”

“Oh, her! Let’s not talk about her,” Silver Moon showed a crestfallen expression on his face.

“What’s wrong?” Gu Fei asked.

“Women only bring you trouble! Let’s not talk about it anymore,” Silver Moon waved his hand, but his cadence was somewhat high that Gu Fei was not the only one who had noticed it.

Imprisonment was a very dull matter. Once all perceived that there seemed to be some sort of story behind a certain matter, they pestered Silver Moon into talking about it.

Silver Moon looked very unwilling. But since everyone continued on pestering him, he sighed deeply and said, “That woman... It was great when we first met; playing the game together, forming Past Deeds together, and developing it to the top guild in Yueye City. Yet, who knows that everything would begin to change after that. She associated herself with bad-mannered players, and began to act tyrannical and arrogant, causing trouble everywhere they went. For others, I could still give them a piece of my mind or kick them out of the guild; as for her, how could I deal with her? I could only pick up after her mess. We carried on like that until she offended nearly every player in Yueye City. After that... Well, you all know what happened afterward.”

“Women only bring trouble,” everyone sighed in agreement.

Gu Fei was unmoved by his emotional speech and asked instead, “Where is she now?”

“Who knows?! When Past Deeds fell, she went somewhere. I messaged her several times, but she didn’t reply even once,” Silver Moon laughed bitterly.

“Heartless and cowardly!” everyone commented.

Silver Moon did not say a word and only heaved a long sigh. All came over and gave their condolences; only Gu Fei remained motionless by the side with a cold expression on his face.

Silver Moon’s emphatic speech might be enough to fool these few players of Yunduan City who were strangers to the matter in Yueye City, yet Gu Fei, as the main instigator that caused Past Deeds’ demise, was different and he could easily tell who between Silver Moon and Vast Lushness was speaking the truth.

Vast Lushness’ domineering and tyrannical actions were true, yet such behavior was normal in Yueye City; it could even be said that that was the norm in that city.

Silver Moon pushed all the Past Deeds’ poor treatment of others

toward Vast Lushness and several ‘bad-mannered’ members as if they were the only rotten eggs in the omelet. In actuality, all the Past Deeds’ members were arrogant and overbearing. Silver Moon himself acted like that, as Gu Fei recalled that he was once Yueye City’s top PKer on the Wanted Players list.

Right now, Silver Moon had a fresh set of level 40 equipment as he sat here in the prison, basking in everyone’s sympathies and praises. As for Vast Lushness, she was being hunted – or being beaten – to death by their enemies outside. She might have brought him trouble, yet the real heartless and cowardly individual here was Silver Moon.

Disdain. Endless Disdain!

Chapter 134 - Gambling

Gu Fei was eyeing Silver Moon with extreme disdain, yet the latter did not even notice it. After winning everyone's sympathy with his speech, the relationship between everyone in the cell seemed to have become closer. Silver Moon was truly leader material, as he actually managed to become the core of the cell occupants with just a few words. Gu Fei felt disgruntled when he saw everyone instinctively gravitating and crowding around Silver Moon.

After Silver Moon's sob story, he addressed everyone anew, "Everyone's pretty bored, right? Come. Let me show you something good to pass the time!"

"What is it?" everyone asked, curious.

Silver Moon beamingly opened his palm. All peeked at it and their eyes shone brightly afterward. Three dice lay on Silver Moon's palm.

"Wanna play a few rounds?" Silver Moon smilingly asked, and everyone excitedly nodded their heads.

"Why don't you guys join us as well?" Silver Moon beckoned Gu Fei's 'customers' that were huddled in the opposite corner of the cell. After Gu Fei successfully countered their plan to appeal to Royal God Call's 'customers', they glumly maintained their distance from the rest of the cell occupants.

The men looked at one another for a while. Imprisonment was a dull affair, so they would gladly participate in something that could allow them to pass the time, yet they were currently hesitating due to their pride.

"Come on! It's better with more people," Silver Moon shouted, turning to address his two companions, "Go drag them over here."

Silver Moon's two friends moved to get up, but the players

already used that excuse to head over. Gu Fei chuckled impassively, Pull? Pull, my a*s. There's no way for players to have contact with one another in a safe zone like this cell.

Silver Moon proved to have quite a good grasp of people's hearts, yet he forgot to consider someone. After successfully gathering everyone, Silver Moon finally noticed that Gu Fei did not join them, so he quickly waved at him, "Brother Miles, come and join us in the fun, too!"

"No, thanks." Gu Fei smiled, saying, "I'm a little tired, so I'll lie down for a bit! You guys go ahead." With that, he folded his arms and placed them behind his head like a pillow and lay down. Silver Moon felt quite disappointed. He really wanted to pull Gu Fei to his side, but this Mage was not receptive to his methods. As he was about to try calling him over again, Gu Fei turned to his side and faced his butt to him. Thus, Silver Moon could only swallow what he had wanted to say.

Everyone of course knew how to play with dice. With how much they were shouting, it was as if this sort of gambling did not depend on luck but on their vocal cords instead.

How would Gu Fei sleep with such a din? He began to regret his earlier decision. Lying down for two hours in such a noisy environment without anyone to talk to... Was this not as good as self-punishment? With that thought in mind, Gu Fei got up and turned around. Silver Moon had a sly smile on his face as he glanced at him, "So, I guess you can't sleep!"

Gu Fei nodded his head, "Forget it! I'll join in as well!"

Silver Moon beamed in delight and vacated a spot for Gu Fei to sit in, "That's right; it's boring to do nothing. Oh, yeah. How long are you in here for?"

"Two hours," Gu Fei casually replied.

"Oh. How about you guys?" Silver Moon asked the rest of the

players.

When fellow cellmates met for the first time, their usual question to one another was “How many hours?”, so no one found Silver Moon’s question suspicious. All stated their prison time. Since Royal God Call and Gu Fei had specifically chosen players with high PK value as their bounty targets, all these players had quite a long duration ahead of them. Gu Fei turned out to be the one serving the shortest time with only two hours after all stated their imprisonment duration, yet these players entered the prison earlier, so all were at the final stretch of their stay.

This last portion was usually the hardest to endure, so many found it a blessing that Silver Moon had brought this game of dice in, allowing them to pass the time quicker with something largely entertaining as gambling.

Gu Fei usually took things in stride, so he immediately immersed himself into the game. Because he did not have the same conservative attitude toward in-game currency like the regular players, he gambled with a sort of ‘did not matter if I won or lost’ mentality. Although that was well worthy of praise, the amount of joy he could gain from playing the game decreased by quite a bit.

The other players were different; they hooted, hollered, and stared at one another with competitiveness, making the game exciting and nerve-wracking. When they won, they wanted to win more; when they lost, they wanted to recover their loss. This was how people found gambling so addictive. Furthermore, most players were not rich and some even had very trashy luck, losing all their gambling funds after a short while.

This was when Silver Moon would swoop in and lend them a hand, passing them a few gold coins and simply stating that it was a loan.

Those players who had received a loan from him naturally continued to play. If they won, they would pay up; if they lost,

they would borrow some more.

After a while, it became a habit for everyone to borrow some coins from Silver Moon after losing everything they had. Silver Moon did not reject any of them. Gu Fei, who did not lack in-game currency, also tried reaching out and borrowing coins from him several times, getting 5 gold coins from Silver Moon in total.

Silver Moon's dubious character made Gu Fei suspicious of all this. However, he had yet to discover anything shady after observing the gambling process.

Everyone's playing style was simplistic. There was no specific dealer or player. When it came to the dice roll, the largest number would win the whole pot. If there were two same rolls, the pot would be split 50/50. This was a game entirely dependent on luck and it was the simplest sort of gambling that did not need any consideration whatsoever.

After observing the players' winning and losing expressions, he realized that all of them, including Silver Moon, were guileless gamblers. Seems like this really is an innocent game to while the time away, Gu Fei refuted his original thought that Silver Moon had some devious plan in mind. Honestly speaking, winning this game was easy for Gu Fei. If it was a rolling with a dice cup, Gu Fei would not be able to roll out any particular result. But if it was a straight toss like what they were doing now, although he did not have any practice in doing so, Gu Fei had the dexterity to toss out the numbers he needed three out of ten times. This was much better odds compared to others who purely depended on luck.

Gu Fei did not see a need to use it, though, so he honestly depended on his luck to make the casual throws. Moreover, rolling out his required numbers with the three dice was quite taxing; he even thought of it as a harder feat to accomplish than throwing a flying dagger to kill someone. If he had to do such tosses, Gu Fei reckoned that his wrist and hand would immediately cramp up from the effort. Having adroit fingers was truly very difficult.

And so, the bunch of cell occupants continued to engage in their theoretically illegal gambling without a hitch. They cared naught for who would lose or win, only that they could while their time away. One after another, the players were sent out of the prison once their time was up. There was even a player who had just won a big pot right before he left. Just as he happily pounced upon the pile of coins, his time in prison was up and he was unceremoniously sent out before he could put even 1 copper coin inside his dimensional pocket. Everyone became alert after that.

This was a game, after all. The quest log would have a countdown timer on how much time was left before the players could be released from prison. Players who therefore continued to gamble despite their time almost being up were simply fighting against time at that point. The power of gambling was clearly displayed in everyone's attitude. Seeing that their time was almost up, each of them looked very unwilling to leave. Some players who were intently playing the game even looked as if their leaving was akin to them dying.

As Gu Fei did not care about winning or losing, he naturally did not feel any attachment toward the game. His heart fluttered like a sparrow in the spring when he saw that his time was almost up. He did not know how much he had won and lost throughout the course of the game; the only thing he knew was that he owed Silver Moon 5 gold coins.

At this point, the only ones left serving their time in the cell were Gu Fei and Silver Moon and his two companions. Playing with just the few of them was no longer exciting, so they began to chat with one another more.

"Miles, I've felt that you are not just an average player the moment I first laid my eyes on you," Silver Moon complimented Gu Fei graciously.

"He he!" Gu Fei chortled.

“You should consider my offer; join me and let’s build the number one mercenary group in Yunduan City,” Silver Moon offered.

“There – There’s no need!” Gu Fei rejected once more.

Silver Moon chuckled, “Fine, I won’t force you anymore. Join us whenever you feel like doing so. Add me to your friends list once you get out.” All sorts of messaging services were restricted in the underground prison; adding someone as a friend was part of these restricted services.

Gu Fei did not give a definite answer to Silver Moon’s suggestion.

Silver Moon looked at the time, “How many minutes do you have left?”

“Sixteen minutes.” With that, he threw his dice and collected the gold coins into his arms while maintaining a poker face the whole time.

“You’re pretty lucky; how many consecutive wins is that?” Silver Moon asked, surprised.

Faking puzzlement, Gu Fei scrunched his face and openly exclaimed, “How annoying; why wasn’t my luck so good when there were more people around.” Now only four of them were left, the final pot was no more than three gold coins. The content was far fewer than what it had before.

The speed of the rounds between them was faster, though. Gu Fei fought for every second faster than the people who had left before him now that it was his turn to leave. Silver Moon pointed at him and jokingly said, “Man, I never saw you playing with such vigor when everyone was here. Now your luck with the rolls has become good, are you trying to sap me of my coins?”

Gu Fei laughed politely.

“How many coins do you have? Why don’t we play for a larger wager?” Silver Moon suggested.

“Oh, that’s great. Let’s have 12 gold coins as the ante,” Gu Fei readily agreed.

“12 gold coins? Why is it 12 gold coins?” Silver Moon could not understand why he had picked such an odd number.

Gu Fei laughed, “There are three of you, so a winning of 12 gold coins can be split evenly!”

Three against one; the three would win as long as one of them had a higher roll than Gu Fei, whereas Gu Fei only had one chance to win against all three of them. This was no longer about luck and was now an arithmetic equation of probability.

Silver Moon’s face immediately blanched when heard what Gu Fei had said, “Miles what do you mean? Are you saying that us, three, are trying to fleece you?”

Gu Fei still had that same smile on his face, “Man, can’t you tell I was joking?”

Silver Moon still maintained that wronged expression on his face.

Gu Fei said, “Look. If I truly suspected you guys of foul play, would I suggest upping the ante? Do you think I’m stupid?”

Hearing that, Silver Moon’s face slightly softened as he nodded his head, “I hope Miles didn’t think we’re that sort of people.”

“How could that be,” Gu Fei laughed forcefully. “Why don’t we just bet 13 gold coins, instead? How does that sound?”

“Not a problem,” Silver Moon accepted it readily.

Fourteen minutes later, the betting had to stop. One of Silver Moon’s companions paled, “I have no coins left.”

Gu Fei’s expression was even more serious than this person’s. Staring at the small mountain of gold coins, he gaped, “To think all my good luck today rest entirely in these few minutes.”

Silver Moon’s face was ashen and he said dryly, “Your luck is

really great.”

“Yeah, it is!” Gu Fei nodded his head as he began to fill his dimensional pocket with his earnings. When it got to his last 5 gold coins, he returned it to Silver Moon, “I’m returning you the 5 gold coins I borrowed earlier.”

“Forget it. It’s only 5 gold coins,” Silver Moon pushed his hand away.

“Take ‘em! Take ‘em!” Gu Fei forcefully stuffed the few gold coins into Silver Moon’s hands as he patted his dimensional pocket, “I’ve already gotten quite a bit of gold coins from you.”

Silver Moon’s eyes twitched crazily.

Gu Fei glanced at that companion of his that had lost all his gold coins, “Shall I lend you some gold coins? Else, you guys can’t continue once I leave.”

The person shook his head and did not say a word.

“Are you sure you don’t need any?” Gu Fei asked once more.

“Nope,” the person croaked.

“Oh! If that’s the case, I’m leaving,” Gu Fei stood up.

The three nodded their heads as Silver Moon said, “Keep in touch.”

“How much longer are you guys in for?” Gu Fei asked instead.

“About four hours more,” Silver Moon answered.

“Good luck. See you guys around,” Gu Fei looked at the broke player and waved goodbye. In a white flash, he found himself out of the cell.

“F*ck!” Just as Gu Fei disappeared, the broke player who had lost everything to Gu Fei beat the floorboards in exasperation.

The other player picked up the three dice and studied them closely, “Was his luck truly just amazing?”

“What else could it be?” Silver Moon retorted.

“Skill?” someone voiced his suspicion.

“If he had this skill, he would already be rich. Why would he use it here to win a few shitty gold coins?” Silver Moon stated the obvious.

The other two companions of his were speechless, neither able to make sense of what had just happened. Actually, Silver Moon also did not feel good right now as he had lost many gold coins as well.

“Forget it; let’s not think anymore about that. Now that the prison is empty, let us begin our quest!” With that sentence, his two companions nodded their heads and all three began to get busy in the cell.

Gu Fei, who had finally exited the prison, breathed a huge sigh of relief. The game environment inside was too real. The air in the underground prison was damp and rotten. The game designers boldly designed everything inside to be so life-like because they knew that the simulation would have no negative effect on people’s health in reality. However, the psychological effect of undergoing that entire ordeal was evident. Gu Fei gasped for quite a few breaths of air and instantly thought that the world was a truly wonderful place to live freely in and would never ever enter the prison again even if it meant his death. After Gu Fei collected himself, he finally noticed that a person was seating on the stone steps of the underground prison’s entrance.

As he bewilderedly backed away for a bit, the person turned its face toward his direction. “It’s you,” the person said expressionlessly.

It was Vast Lushness. Gu Fei sighed in relief as he asked, “Are you waiting for Silver Moon?”

Vast Lushness nodded her head, “I sent him a message and the system prompt stated that he is ‘not in a serviceable area’, so that

probably means that he's currently serving time in prison."

Gu Fei nodded his head, "He's inside. I saw him."

"Oh..." Vast Lushness said, yet no happiness was visible on her face.

"I'm going."

"Bye."

Gu Fei walked off a few steps before turning back. Vast Lushness sat there by the stone steps by herself, looking very lonesome. He thought for a bit before finally returning to face Vast Lushness.

She raised her head to look at Gu Fei.

"There are some things that you should know..." Gu Fei began. As Vast Lushness looked at him unerringly, Gu Fei repeated everything Silver Moon had said inside the prison.

Her expression actually did not change much when he told her everything. No rage or sadness was visible on her face and she just listened quietly to Gu Fei's recount.

"I... I still want to ask him myself," Vast Lushness finally said.

Gu Fei nodded his head and walked away. Turning his head backward after five steps, he shared, "Silver Moon said he should be out in four hours or so. Maybe you can log off and take a rest first."

"Alright," Vast Lushness nodded her head.

Gu Fei faced forward once more and left the area. He did not look back even once and walked all the way to a log-off point and went offline.

When he got online the next day, he immediately received Royal God Call's message asking him to head over at Ray's Bar. By the time Gu Fei entered their usual private room, all the members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group were already there. Before everyone would grind in earnest each night, the mercenary group

members would meet up and spend time together for a bit. Truthfully, there would hardly be any form of interaction between the six if it was not for this habitual meet-up. This was because the mercenary group had not had anyone hiring them for anything for a long time.

This reality proved that Young Master Han was not fit to be in charge of the mercenary group's operations.

Many ways existed for a mercenary group to gain fame compared to a guild. A guild's strength lay in its number of members and the quality of these members. As for a mercenary group, besides the two methods mentioned, it also had the quest completion leaderboard in the Hall of Mercenaries to display the group's prowess.

The leaderboard was arranged by the total number of quests taken, the number of quests completed, and the overall percentage of quest completion of every mercenary group. The amount of completed quests and percentage of completed quests were very important factors. With a higher percentage of completed quests, a mercenary group would indubitably be widely lauded.

As for Young Master's Elite mercenary group, it was not even listed there. Just based on the percentage of completed quests alone, the mercenary group achieved the highest possible 100%. However, when the number of completed quests was considered, people would think that the mercenary group was a newly established one. This was especially so because the mercenary group's attainment and completion of system-issued quests was glaringly zero.

Chapter 135 - Event

The system would release a set amount of quests, which was more than the amount of requests from players who needed help, at a specific time every day. Any mercenary group that wished to attain fame would depend on completing these system-issued quests repeatedly every single day. If the completion count and percentage of success were high, the mercenary group's rank would become higher. Naturally, players would look for these better ranked mercenary groups to aid them in their requests.

However, system-issued quests, especially those repeatable ones, were very boring. No matter how interesting a quest was, no one would find joy in doing it for ten times, hundred times, or thousand times. The perseverance required to do so would be staggering.

Young Master Han was extremely impatient when it came to doing such dull tasks, so the mercenary group under his leadership did not even consider this route. Young Master Han's plan was to become famous through the word of mouth of players who had hired their mercenary group before.

The first step toward this development was considerably successful; the quest to takedown Mountain Bandit Leader Sooto in Oolong Cave was extremely difficult back then, so completing it allowed Young Master's Elite mercenary group to become a key figure of discussion in the Hall of Mercenaries and taverns for a period of time. It was this success that that had led to Amethyst Rebirth looking them up for a request.

However, No Smile was a mercenary mission that was done with utmost secrecy. Although the success for the mission was beyond outstanding, it did not technically contribute to the mercenary group's statistics.

Afterward, no other missions out there were worth picking up.

Obtaining quests with extreme level of difficulty needed good luck and not all players were willing to expend the effort and funds to hire others to complete their quests for them.

These factors caused the development of Young Master's Elite mercenary group to stagnate. It was unclear if Young Master Han had lost his enthusiasm for the group as he did not do anything to help develop their prospects now that they had no business readily at hand. While other mercenary group leaders would spend days in the Hall of Mercenaries to research and choose all sorts of quests, Young Master Han would instead be at Ray's Bar drinking all day. At this rate, Young Master's Elite would eventually become just another small mercenary group that was hardly worth noticing.

Today, with the six men gathered, Young Master Han suddenly announced: "The time for our mercenary group to establish itself is now."

Just as everyone thought that he had become a raving lunatic, Brother Assist explained what Young Master Han meant with a solemn tone, "The system is about to host their first event. It's a mercenary PvP tournament as well as a guild versus guild tournament."

Most companies would use holidays or anniversaries to host special events in order to increase their games' impact to people. Record highs of the number of players online would usually be created on such days. What attracted players even more as well as the main reason why players valued such events was the hard-to-obtain-elsewhere awards that the officials would give during those events.

Parallel World's spokespersons stated that the upcoming special event was to celebrate the official release of the game. Everyone was already aware of this upcoming event since the game company had announced about it when the open beta was about to end. Nonetheless, information regarding the contents of the event was kept under wraps. As for dragging it for more than a month, it was

very likely that the game company extended the period for marketing promotion purposes. Besides, it gave players who had just joined Parallel World after its open beta days more time to increase their levels.

Given how many experience points was required to level up, the distance between the levels of the players was close. Two players who were at level 40 could have a difference of three days worth of grinding time in terms of experience points. And yet, this difference, when translated into Strength, was barely perceptible that it would not arouse a player's sense of satisfaction.

Brother Assist's information sources informed him about the event's particulars before they were announced to the public. Upon finding out that the event would have mercenary group and guild related portions, he immediately told Young Master Han to gather everyone. Since even regular players would do their best to participate in such event no matter how it ended up, experts like them would naturally try their hardest to showcase their prowess in it as well.

"We must dominate this event, so that our names will become renowned throughout Parallel World!" After dramatically saying this, Young Master Han realized his faux-pas. In this room, besides Young Master Han who had changed his IGN, Sword Demon, Brother Assist, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds were already names well-known throughout the gaming community. As for Gu Fei, quite the commotion would even occur if he revealed his identity as Fugitive 27149, seeing as he was currently acknowledged as the best player – or the secret boss – of Parallel World.

Unsurprisingly, Young Master Han's speech about them becoming "renowned throughout Parallel World" did not have any impact on these five men.

Young Master Han cleared his throat as he expressed his opinion once more, "I think we must participate in this event. Since we've

already gotten wind of this matter, everyone should do the necessary preparations. Those who have yet to advance their classes should do so at the earliest—you guys are about done with your individual research, right? Miles, can you make it to level 40 in these few remaining days before the event?”

“I don’t think so,” Gu Fei said. He still needed a large chunk of experience points to reach level 40!

“Has anyone here proceeded with Job Class Advancement already?” Young Master Han asked.

Four of them shook their heads. Each of them was well aware that hurrying to advance the job class would not affect their daily grinding, so no one was careless enough to make a choice before the research of the two available paths was done. All were waiting for the officials to reveal more information before they took that crucial step.

“I’ll leave you guys to it, then!” Young Master Han waved his hand dismissively. From the others’ perspective, he was someone who was afraid of nuisances as even his speech avoided going into details about certain matters. Leaving things as that, he said, “Our main competitors this time are other mercenary groups. Brother Assist will spend the next two days gathering information on the major mercenary groups here in Yunduan City and researching about them.”

All nodded their heads in acknowledgement.

“That’s it,” Young Master Han waved his hands to adjourn the meeting.

“I’m off to continue my ‘Bounty Mission’!” Royal God Call was the first to get up. He said this in a tone that sought for Gu Fei’s instruction and guidance on the matter.

“Go on, Royal,” Gu Fei gave him the go-signal.

With that, the five got up to leave one after another. Young

Master Han only peeked out of the room to shout, “Liquor” over to Ray and then he sat down once more.

Outside the bar, War Without Wounds and Sword Demon went about their businesses. It was at this point that Gu Fei received a summon from Amethyst Rebirth to attend a meeting as well. This in itself was a hundred-year rare occurrence. Having not visited the Amethyst Rebirth’s guild house for quite some time, Gu Fei felt somewhat muddled about which of the door signs on the streets belonged to it.

As he made his way over, he realized that Brother Assist was going down the same route as him. Striking up a conversation with Brother Assist as they walked, Gu Fei suddenly recalled to ask him about a matter, “Do you know of a person called ‘Drifting’?”

“Of course,” Brother Assist said, adding, “He is a veteran gamer – a Mage expert.”

“Is that so? Between him and Royal, who is the stronger one?” Gu Fei asked.

“You’re asking something that people have argued endlessly since those two became famous,” Brother Assist stated.

“But didn’t you guys say that Royal is the number one Mage?” Gu Fei felt that his statement was strange.

“B*llsh*t. That’s only because we have Royal sitting with us. If Drifting was the one sitting there at the time, we would say that he is the number one Mage,” Brother Assist confided.

Gu Fei lost his smile instantly, thinking that they really were a bunch of hypocrites. With that in mind, he asked, “So who do you really think is stronger?” Although Brother Assist’s capability was just so-so, he was definitely the best when it came to gaming knowledge. Evaluation was his strong suit.

“That...” Brother Assist hesitated slightly before saying, “Don’t tell Royal this!”

Gu Fei smiled, “Got it. I already know the answer.”

Brother Assist smiled back, “I’m not saying that Royal isn’t as good. But you’ve seen how flamboyant Royal is. Everyone knows clearly what he is like as a person. Whereas that kid will immediately boast to everyone any new trick or technique he has learned, Drifting does not easily share what he knows to others. If he discovers any trick or technique, I reckon he will hide it well. He is calm and calculative and is usually very low key. You’ll only know how powerful he is when he acts. So while Royal’s strength is obvious for all to see, Drifting will still have something up his sleeves. Just from how they think, I feel that Royal cannot compare to him.”

“Mhm. I share your sentiment,” Gu Fei nodded his head in agreement. Drifting was extremely protective when it came to his ‘Blossoming Crimson Lotus’ skill.

“You know Drifting?” Brother Assist asked, surprised. The five mercenary group members knew how amazing Gu Fei was, yet he was still a newbie in MMO through and through.

Gu Fei nodded his head in affirmation, “I met him two days ago. He’s currently in Yunduan City.”

“What’s he here for?” Brother Assist asked, astonished.

“I don’t know,” Gu Fei shrugged his shoulders.

Brother Assist muttered by his side.

Gu Fei asked another question, “Do you know who those Five Unyielding Experts that everyone is currently talking about are?”

Brother Assist laughed, “The five players who are at level 41 on the overall leaderboard, you mean? I don’t know who that Fighter, Eternal Dominion, is. I’m not sure if he’s someone who has changed his IGN for Parallel World. The Archer called Deep Waters and the Warrior called Southern Lone Blade are two famous professional gamers. As for that Thief, Svelte Dancer, that person

is a woman. She is known historically as the mightiest pay-to-win gamer. I've never had contact with this woman before, but I heard that her skill control is quite prodigious. It's not unexpected that she is strong; while others put their money into starting a business, she chose to spend hers on training her skills. However, I feel that if Sword Demon hasn't been ganged up on and lost his level, then one of the five's positions would be his."

"What a pity," Gu Fei felt sorry for Sword Demon. The amount of work he had put into this game was definitely not something anybody could imagine. His passion toward gaming was comparable to Gu Fei's passion toward kung fu. On the flipside, Young Master Han was much more casual about gaming, making him wonder how the two even got together.

Ray's Bar was not far from Amethyst Rebirth, but it was rare for Brother Assist to actually walk with Gu Fei all the way there. By the time their conversation ended, the signboard for Amethyst Rebirth was already before the two's eyes. Gu Fei pointed to it and said, "I've arrived at my destination."

"Oh," Brother Assist patted him and smiled warmly before continuing his way.

Gu Fei pushed open the door and inhaled the cool air inside.

It had been a long time since he last visited this place. Amethyst Rebirth's headquarters did not get larger but the people it housed increased quite substantially. Gu Fei swept his gaze to his usual spot by the corner and found someone already occupying it.

Not knowing where to position himself, he just stood dumbly by the entrance. Quite a number of new faces spotted Gu Fei and each of them had a bewildered expression on their faces. They had never seen a man enter this room ever since joining Amethyst Rebirth.

As discomfiture set in, a lady suddenly popped out of the crowd and headed toward Gu Fei while shouting, "Miles!"

Gu Fei glanced over. Isn't that Xiaoyu? After a month of not seeing her, the lady's appearance had changed so much. Gone was her full-body, heavy armor and in its place was a form-fitting, flexible armor that was popular among female Warriors. This sort of armor might look fragile, but it was considered as the heavy armor variant. The game company refitted the armor's design since they knew the female players' fussiness about their appearances. Red and black dominated Xiaoyu's armor design. It did not have any bright glow or shimmer, yet it still had a very bold and heroic feel to it. She was not wearing her helmet at this moment, so her long hair cascaded on her shoulders as she walked toward Gu Fei. It was truly a wonderful sight that harmoniously mixed strength with gentleness.

"Long time no see!" June's Rain casually patted Gu Fei on his back.

Gu Fei was still smiling when that clap slammed onto his back. That clap on his back weighed a ton, and he instantly cried out inside him, Not good! Xiaoyu was still such a klutz who did not know how to hold her strength back.

As he staggered to the side for several steps, Gu Fei's ego received a heavy bruising. Gu Fei getting outbalanced by a lady's single slap was just too ridiculous, yet he was helpless against this situation. As the characters in-game continued to allocate points, the players' Strength, Agility, and similar stats began to go beyond human beings' capabilities. Xiaoyu's full-Strength build was like the power of Popeye. Gu Fei was easily overpowered and crushed like aluminum can.

Just as Gu Fei was about to find his balance, someone slotted her arm into his and propped him up. He turned and saw that the person was Will-low.

"You alright?" Will-low smiled.

"I'm fine!" Feeling miserable, he returned the question to her,

“Are you alright?”

Will-low knew what he was talking about, so she nodded her head.

When Gu Fei was thrown out of balance, someone cried out in a reproaching tone, “Xiaoyu!”

June’s Rain covered her mouth as she exclaimed, “Ahhh! I forgot!”

With that, she quickly came over to have a look at Gu Fei. “Don’t mind her. She already staggered quite a few people today.” The one speaking was Guild Leader July whom Gu Fei had not met for more than a month.

“Why would I mind? Xiaoyu and I are brothers, after all!” Gu Fei said.

“He he! That’s right!” Xiaoyu agreed as she tried to pat him on the shoulder once more. Gu Fei was no longer careless this time and he shifted his shoulder to the side, causing that slap of hers to loudly whisk by.

“I don’t think I can afford to let my guard down!” Gu Fei wiped the sweat off his forehead in relief.

It was at this moment that Heal descended on to Gu Fei’s body. He knew who the culprit was without even looking at her. Just as he had presumed, Luo Luo’s voice resounded from the side, “You won’t treat my Heal as useless this time, right?” An all-Strength Warrior’s Attack Power without a weapon was nothing to scoff at, so Xiaoyu’s first slap indeed lowered Gu Fei’s HP by some.

Gu Fei did not reply to her, thinking that all these guild ladies were such a handful.

“Everyone, let me introduce this person here,” July clapped her hands to call all the ladies’ attention, saying, “This person is our guild’s Thousand Miles Drunk.”

The ladies who had previously not known about Gu Fei already learned from the old members of his identity. Since July was the one formally introducing him, everyone reacted accordingly with applauses and screams. There were even some who whistled. Gu Fei was someone who had never appeared before them, so the ladies jokingly dubbed him as a ‘Man of Mystery’. The atmosphere became really lively now that he was here in person and was being teased by everyone enthusiastically.

It was at this moment in time when Gu Fei’s profession came into play.

The boys and girls in the school that Gu Fei was teaching took P.E. classes separately, so P.E. teachers like him could be said to be the only ones that could take on a group of girls by themselves. Gu Fei already experienced such scenarios countless times before, so he very casually nodded his head toward the ladies and greeted, “Hello, students.”

“Ha ha ha ha!” Everyone played along with Gu Fei’s joke and laughingly said, “Hello, sir!”

This scene unknowingly lifted the mood. Gu Fei once more smiled toward the ladies and the awkwardness in the air dissipated on its own. Luo Luo was simply amazed as she watched all this unfold from the side. This guy is always uncomfortable whenever I bestowed Heal on to him, yet he’s actually calmly interacting with all these ladies, Luo Luo thought to herself.

July swept her gaze over the crowd and happily announced, “Alright. Everyone more or less is here. Let me begin by saying that the officials are about to host an event. The activities this time are a mercenary PvP tournament as well as a guild versus guild tournament. I heard that the prizes will be rather generous. Our guild isn’t huge, but there’s no harm in us participating in it. Both matches are not mutually exclusive either. Since our guild does not have a mercenary group, we can form one if there are members here who wish to participate in the mercenary PvP tournament.”

The ladies solemnly listened to July speak. Only Xiaoyu leaped up and clenched her fists as she moved to hit Gu Fei in her excitement, “It’s a quest! A QUEST!”

No wonder she suddenly came back; it was because she wanted to participate in this event. Although Parallel World had been up for some time, this girl’s fervor toward quests did not diminish in the least. Gu Fei smilingly took a few steps backward to dodge the unintentional attack. That first slap of hers is already painful enough. If I receive this current punch of hers, won’t I get punctured?

July’s speech had not yet ended, “Ladies, try your best to level up as much as you can in these few remaining days before the event commences.”

It seemed like July also had someone in the know, as she got a hold of information that Brother Assist had gotten wind of.

“So, who wishes to enter the mercenary PvP tournament? Come and sign up and we’ll form a mercenary group,” July encouraged.

That competition would clearly be a PvP match, so few Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies were interested in it. Joining the guild and experiencing the event together with everyone was already enough. To participate in the mercenary PvP tournament ... The ladies’ enthusiasm waned a bit. Besides Lie Lie who promptly jumped out and put her name forward as team leader, everyone else was hesitating.

“Miles, are you participating?” July singled him out and asked.

“I already have a mercenary group,” Gu Fei refused.

“Oh!” July did not say anything else. This sort of occurrence was commonplace. Not every guild would have a mercenary group under its name. Amethyst Rebirth was one such example; therefore, it was excusable for its members to join external mercenary groups.

Lie Lie cajoled for a long time before she managed to convince a few ladies to join the group. Gu Fei laughed disapprovingly by the side, thinking of the ladies' subpar skills being pitted against Sword Demon and the bunch of experts'. Besides relying on their seduction skills, there was nary a chance for these ladies to claim victory.

Thinking of that, Gu Fei immediately realized that if these ladies really clashed with Young Master's Elite mercenary group, they would instantly lose Royal God Call and War Without Wounds in the ensuing battle.

As for the other three men, they might not act as crazily as Royal God Call and War Without Wounds toward women on the surface, yet who knew what they were feeling inside? Gu Fei recalled how Sword Demon's emotions were all over the place when he first met Xi Xiaotian back then.

As he was indulging in all these nonsensical thoughts, Gu Fei received a message. He opened the message and saw that it was Coward's Savior calling loudly, "Master, I finally managed to contact you. Let's meet."

"Where?" Gu Fei asked.

As the two set a meeting place, Gu Fei saw that the ladies were beginning to disperse. He bade the few he was friendlier with goodbye before leaving the guild house.

Gu Fei and Coward's Savior arranged to meet at the fountain by the plaza at the heart of Yunduan City. Coward's Savior had already been waiting there for quite some time when Gu Fei arrived. As soon as he spotted Gu Fei, he immediately struck a Mantis Fist style stance; his body rocked back and forth as his mouth mimicked the insect's cry.

Gu Fei immediately went forward and extended his leg to hook Coward's Savior's. The latter swiftly took half a step backward to dodge that while maintaining his stance. He actually evaded Gu

Fei's leg hook.

"You've trained well!" Gu Fei complimented. Coward's Savior's half a step completely complimented Seven Stars Steps' footwork. Naturally, Gu Fei's cursory leg hook was done to probe him. Otherwise, how could Coward's Savior's one month of training match Gu Fei's twenty years of kung fu training? Would that not mean that Coward's Savior was far more deserving to be the lead star here?

Having received Gu Fei's praise, Coward's Savior happily continued to display his fighting stance.

"Alright, alright! That's enough!" Gu Fei said. Mantis Fist Style's stance was very flashy, so it easily drew the people's attention in this crowded location of the city.

"What's happening over in Yueye City?" Gu Fei engaged Coward's Savior in some polite small talk.

Coward's Savior shook his head, "Same old, same old. Originally, everyone thought that eradicating Past Deeds would turn things for the better. In the end, the Ten Guild Alliance has more members than Past Deeds, which resulted into them being worse player bullies."

"The Ten Guild Alliance? What is that?" Gu Fei asked.

"Oh. It's the alliance of ten guilds. Since none of the guilds' level is high enough to contain all Yueye City's people, they have yet to merge all right now," Coward's Savior explained.

Gu Fei inhaled a sharp breath. Before, the tyrannical and overbearing guild was only Past Deeds; now, with the alliance of those ten guilds... Yueye City was indeed a place that never grew peaceful.

"Yueye City's players decreased by a huge lot," Coward's Savior continued, saying, "Everyone already ran off to other in-game cities."

Chapter 136 - Survival Challenge

Gu Fei and Coward's Savior went back to discussing about kung fu once they concluded their small talk. Coward's Savior could not wait to let Gu Fei witness the progress he had made in this one month of training.

Gu Fei failed to stop Coward's Savior in time and the latter already bellowed a cry, leaping to the side of the fountain and executing several moves of the Mantis Fist Style. The demonstration was unintentionally garish and immediately drew the attention of the surrounding players. Watching Coward's Savior, these spectators mumbled the same question to one another: "Is he sick or something?"

Coward's Savior was unfazed by the people's odd looks and continued executing the moves of the Seven Stars Mantis Fist Style: Thrusting Hammer, Wheel Turnover, Spring Step, Ripping off the Helmet, Double Flower Thrust, Eighteen Weave... Each move was measured, accurate, and smooth. Using online gaming terms, Coward's Savior's skill and proficiency were already quite high. However, it was an entirely different story when it came to applying his moves to actual combat.

Gu Fei felt moved when he saw that Coward's Savior cared naught for the people's ridiculing stares toward him, as this scenario was something he was well acquainted with. When he was younger, Gu Fei was so proud of his kung fu that he also disregarded everyone's strange looks. In retrospect, he knew that his pride for his capability could only be kept in his heart because far too many people did not understand it.

Just like Gu Fei's situation in his school... Kung fu... Under such a circumstance that everyone treated it as a sort of joke, his reverence for it unknowingly diminished. Unless—"Hey! What's this nincompoop doing?" a man suddenly heckled from the crowd.

Sigh! Coward's Savior happened to be facing that direction and saw the person who had mocked him. With a roar, he charged toward the disrespectful man and performed the lower back suplex he had learned from Nine Twists and Eighteen Trips – another move of the Seven Stars Mantis Style. As the man's back hit the ground, Coward's Savior took two steps backward to assume his original position.

Gu Fei nodded his head sagely, That's how it should be done. That was the only way to show others that kung fu was not a joke. It was a pity that Gu Fei was restricted from using this method on his naysayers since he was young; otherwise, it would have been a simple matter for him to demonstrate the genuineness and value of his martial arts prowess.

The man who had received the suplex felt stunned. However, he quickly recovered himself upon seeing that his HP did not decrease much. The laughter of the crowd around him made him feel utterly embarrassed. With a forward roll, he got up and cursed, "Stinky brat." Reaching into his dimensional pocket, he pulled out his Bastard Sword and brandished it menacingly toward Coward's Savior.

Gu Fei stood still, watching how Coward's Savior would react to this.

Coward's Savior calmly slid to the side with two steps, and the overhead cleave that had come from behind Coward's Savior missed him entirely. He then proceeded to hug the man around the waist. A thunderous bellow escaped Coward's Savior's lips as he tossed the opponent into the air, landing him right into the nearby fountain with a splash.

"Oh, come on!" Gu Fei muttered under his breath. Seismic Toss... Coward's Savior actually used his job class' skill in the nick of time to save himself instead of the Mantis Fist Style.

The man was soaked through as he stood up from the fountain.

He clearly knew now that he was no match for Coward's Savior when it came to PvP. With the deafening laughter coming from the surrounding crowd, he meekly crawled out of the fountain and made himself scarce as soon as he could.

“Let’s go!” Gu Fei said to Coward's Savior.

“Are we not practicing anymore?” Coward's Savior asked; he was not finished with his demonstration yet.

“Let’s find a place with monsters to practice!” Gu Fei answered.

Coward's Savior was new to Yunduan City, so he was naturally not familiar with any of the grinding maps here. Moreover, Coward's Savior was currently only at level 34 as he neither played much during this past month nor possessed a grinding efficiency near Gu Fei’s level. Gu Fei brought him to a level 30 grinding map, pointing to the monsters and saying to Coward’s Savior, “There are three phases when practicing kung fu: fundamental, routine, and sparring. You’ve already learned the fundamentals in reality so doing them in-game is not necessary. You’re also familiar with the routine, so what’s left is sparring. When it comes to individual sparring, it is usually done with a wooden dummy or a punching bag. It’s even better inside the game, since there will be moving monsters for you to practice on. Alright, go and freeform!”

“Can’t I spar against you?” Coward's Savior asked.

“Spar against me?” Gu Fei asked, shocked. “Well, if you’re not afraid of hurting your own dignity, I don’t mind at all!”

As Coward's Savior’s face instantly flushed red, Gu Fei patted his back and said, “It’s a process to move from individual sparring to a friendly spar. Take it easy!”

Coward's Savior nodded his head.

“When it comes to sparring, you can no longer follow the set moves you previously learned based upon your routine. You need to apply your moves in accordance to the opponent’s position,

choosing the right move for the right situation. Here, let me show you,” Gu Fei immediately closed in on a monster as he finished saying this.

The monster howled as it was engaged by Gu Fei into combat. Gu Fei deftly dodged its first attack. Jabbing his fist toward it, he shifted his position to throw another fist and a low kick. Coward's Savior was left dumbfounded when he saw Gu Fei call out the various moves of the Mantis Fist Style as he performed them one by one.

Fast! He was truly too fast! Gu Fei's full-Agility build allowed him to have a faster striking speed than Coward's Savior by quite a lot. Gu Fei's every punch and every kick did not contain unnecessary movements and were executed very smoothly and clearly, allowing Coward's Savior to easily distinguish which routine or move each attack came from. It was a truly impressive display of kung fu techniques. Coward's Savior unblinkingly admired the sight before him.

Gu Fei spent over three minutes pummeling the monster before it died. It was too bad that despite his smooth kung fu execution, the system still deemed each move he had made as just a normal attack. A barehanded Mage's normal attack could only do 1 point of damage against this type of monsters with decent defense. Thus, Gu Fei had to hit the monster countless times before it finally died. “So, how was it?” Gu Fei returned beside Coward's Savior and asked him.

Coward's Savior was crying and his face was crestfallen, “And I thought I could spar against you. I've already lost my self-esteem just from witnessing your individual sparring. How did your moves get so fast?!”

“I added lots of points to Agility...” Gu Fei answered.

“Oh, right... This is a game...” Coward's Savior clearly got this VR game and reality all mixed up.

“How did you set your stats?” Gu Fei asked.

“Spirit, Strength, and a little bit of Agility...” Coward's Savior replied. The Fighter's specialty was their combo attack capability; therefore, the Spirit stat that affected how fast skills or spells could be unleashed was very important to them.

“No matter. You can reset your points once you reach level 40.” Gu Fei never thought that he would have the opportunity to say this to another player, hastily reminding Coward's Savior, “Having low Agility will not do if you wish to use kung fu in this game. But you won't need to do such thing if you're doing this for gaming purposes.”

Making such a choice was difficult for martial arts practitioners like him who were playing Parallel World, as martial arts techniques evidently did not go well with in-game skills. Take Gu Fei as an example; if it were not for his top-grade equipment, his Mage job class would practically be useless. Gu Fei had level 70 equipment that helped improve his Mage job class' capability, but the same could not be said for Coward's Savior. In addition, Gu Fei did not care much about his in-game job class, so his way of thinking was of course different compared to other players. It all depended on how much Coward's Savior loved kung fu.

“Alright, you can stay here and keep training. Call me if there's anything else,” Gu Fei's instruction for Coward's Savior ended, so he bade him farewell.

Gu Fei left to grind levels alone, occasionally helping Royal God Call with his 'Bounty Mission'. When the Amethyst Rebirth's grinding party called for Gu Fei at 7 P.M., Gu Fei used the excuse of helping Royal God Call with his quest to avoid going.

“Miles, you're not coming to grind today?” Drifting immediately sent a message to him.

“Nope. Gotta help my friend with his quest,” Gu Fei explained.

“Oh. Then, I won’t go as well...” Drifting said. In all honesty, top-tier experts like Drifting and his two companions and Gu Fei considered solo grinding as more efficient than party grinding. Drifting only joined the level grinding of the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies mainly because he was interested in finding out Gu Fei’s Spell Damage. Since Gu Fei would not be grinding there, he of course would not be wasting his time with the ladies either. How could Drifting become one of the top five, a.k.a. the Five Unyielding Experts, on the overall leaderboard if he were constantly distracted by women?

War Without Wounds and Royal God Call were two living examples. Ever since they started grinding with the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies, their drop from the experience leaderboard had been unprecedented.

Actually, such a job would be most suitable for Gu Fei since he did not care for his leveling speed.

Without the two experts’ assistance, the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies could naturally not grind on monsters beyond their level so they uncaringly headed toward their usual level 40 grinding spot. Just like Gu Fei, they cared not for the speed of their leveling. Of course, grinding on monsters above their level was way better, but they were still fine with not doing it. Instead, the ladies were more curious about the two men, Gu Fei and Drifting, not being able to join them at the same time. Could there perhaps be an affair of sorts?

That was how the next three days passed by. When the officials finally announced the particulars of the event, they were indeed a mercenary PvP tournament and guild versus guild tournament like what Brother Assist had heard. Apparently, there was supposed to be an individual PvP tournament as well, yet the job classes’ discrepancy was rather obvious so it would be unfair to host it. If they restricted it only to a PvP between players of the same job class, the Priests’ and Knights’ low amount of PvP skills would be

hardly worth watching. Thus, it was scrapped in the end.

There was only one activity in this event that everybody was looking forward to: The Survival Challenge.

While the name sounded frightening, it was actually just like a match in Counterstrike. Two teams would be casually thrown into a randomly generated map with a set time limit to PvP. Victory would naturally come to the team that defeated all its opponents first. If the time ran out and either team still had survivors, the decision would boil down to which team killed more players. This meant that victory would go to the team with more survivors.

Every match would award the winner with in-game currency and experience points. There was also a chance to receive item reward, which was dependent on the winner's performance in a given match. Logically speaking, the reward would be the most bountiful if a team only took one second to defeat all the opponents and had no member casualty. The further the team made it in the contest, the more experience points and gold coins it could earn from each win. The chances for an item reward would increase as well.

Currently, players were mostly attracted to the top-grade item reward as well as Permanent Skill Scrolls.

Permanent Skill Scrolls were something new that the officials had created. It was said that using one would grant a character a new skill, and it could be something several levels above his or her current level or something rare to obtain that was not even listed in a player's skill tree. Nonetheless, there was a restriction: The skill would depend on the winning player's job class. It was impossible for a Mage to get a hold of the Stealth skill.

In a private room inside Ray's Bar, Brother Assist presented the information from the announcement to everyone. Because of his existence, the time that these experts had to trawl the official website for information had decreased. Unless it was related to specific details, Brother Assist naturally kept them in the loop with

regard to the day-to-day news and information.

Just as he mentioned the Permanent Skill Scrolls, Royal God Call became very excited, “If I can get a bunch of those scrolls, won’t I be able to become a dual class holder, a Sharpshooter and a Hunter to boot?”

Everyone stared at him contemptuously. Royal God Call evidently read too many YY novels. What were the chances of such thing happening to him? He was no main character, after all.

“Such thing happening can only occur to a crazy pay-to-win Warrior,” Brother Assist sighed.

“Svelte Dancer...” everyone intoned the name at the same time.

Gu Fei only heard of this name the other day. It seemed that she indeed lived up to her name as the mightiest pay-to-win player. These old birds actually said her name at the same time when ‘a crazy pay-to-win Warrior’ was mentioned.

“Maybe you can fill your desire by bagging a date with this lady, Royal,” Brother Assist joked.

Royal God Call’s face suddenly showed a distant expression.

“Uhm. I’m afraid this sort of rich girl won’t be interested in such an immature child. It’s better if I go instead,” War Without Wounds shamelessly volunteered.

The dirty old man and the young lecher began to quarrel.

“Stop with this nonsense!” Young Master Han slammed the table. The two settled down when Gu Fei pulled out his sword and Sword Demon slid out his dagger.

“Let’s get on with our business,” Young Master Han said impassively.

“I’m done. It’s your turn,” Brother Assist gestured.

“Oh...” Young Master Han nodded his head, pausing first before glancing at everyone, “Hey, where’s my glass?”

Sword Demon quickly got up, “Let’s discuss this tomorrow. He’s already drunk.”

“Sit down,” Young Master Han stared at Sword Demon scornfully, “Do you think I’m you?” With that, he began to tap on the table’s surface as he addressed everyone solemnly, “Large guilds and mercenary groups will definitely use the quickest amount of time to finish their opponents in this tournament. As for small guilds, if they can’t achieve victory through team confrontations, they can only use the second rule to win: beginning a game of cat and mouse as soon as they obtain a lead in the kills. The rule must’ve been introduced for the benefit of small guilds. So that is how we will be fighting whenever we meet mercenary groups larger than us. However, let’s expect for a restriction toward the use of the Thief’s Stealth skill with such a rule in place!” Young Master Han warned.

Brother Assist was momentarily stunned before he nodded his head, “Your mind is pretty agile. There is indeed a restriction, but the rules are not yet revealed.”

Young Master Han smiled smugly, “I’m sure you guys are now aware that having peerless beauty and matchless brains in one being is possible because of my existence!”

Chapter 137 - Svelte Dancer

After everyone vomited inwardly, Brother Assist began to present the information he had collected these past few days regarding the major mercenary groups in Yunduan City.

“The Black Hand mercenary group. It is currently the most well-known, independent mercenary group in Yunduan City. It is at level 5 and has filled up the player limit of one hundred. The mercenary group’s leader is called Black Index Finger, a level 40 Warrior. The group has maintained a steady progress ever since its establishment, consistently accumulating successes due to the leader’s solid management.” After reporting all this, Brother Assist stopped speaking and joined his fellow mercenary group members on squinting at Young Master Han.

Young Master Han was unfazed by their actions and continued to leisurely sip his liquor, “So the group is called The Black Hand and the leader is called Index Finger? Does that mean there is a Thumb, Middle Finger, and Pinky?”

Brother Assist shook his head, “No other players in the mercenary group have similar naming conventions.”

Young Master Han opined, “Maybe they are in other in-game cities. The Black Hand might be the unified name they share, since the name of a mercenary group can be reused in different in-game cities.”

Brother Assist nodded his head in agreement, “Indeed, it can be repeated.”

Gu Fei interjected, “Yueye City has The Black Hand mercenary group, too.”

“What’s the group leader’s name?”

“I don’t know... but it seems like the average small mercenary group,” Gu Fei answered.

“Let’s not bother about that now. The gist is that we are facing a group of one hundred men. Continue, Brother Assist,” Young Master Han said.

“The second largest mercenary group in Yunduan City is Four Seas mercenary group. Just as the name says, it’s the mercenary group of Traversing Four Seas. It is also at level 5 with one hundred players. The group leader is Youthful Reflection. We have faced him before,” Brother Assist said.

“Who’s that person?” Gu Fei asked.

“It’s the guy you tricked into entering Oolong Cave before,” Royal God Call reminded him.

“Oh...” Gu Fei recalled him now. It was not that he forgot about the person, but that he did not even know the guy’s name in the first place. He was different from Brother Assist and the other experts who had known some of these IGNs even before. It was just that there were so many online games that had various servers out there, so even though many expert players existed in the online gaming community, they had yet to meet one another. With the emergence of Parallel World, all these first-rate experts from the various MMOs gathered in this first ever VR game, creating a situation that had never been seen before.

“The members of Four Seas mercenary group are from Traversing Four Seas. In terms of raw strength, I feel that Four Seas is better than The Black Hand. However, I’ve based this report on everyone’s model when discussing mercenary groups, which focuses on their quest completion rate, so Four Seas is ranked number two,” Brother Assist added.

“No matter if they are first or second, they are still our enemies,” Young Master Han commented.

“Besides them, there is also the level 4 Water Flower mercenary group with eighty members under the leadership of Brave Surge. This group belongs to Carouse, the second biggest guild in

Yunduan City. Young Master is a member of this guild, right?" Brother Assist asked Young Master Han as he introduced this third-ranked mercenary group to the gang.

Young Master Han nodded his head, "This guild's name is to my liking, so I changed my mind about not joining any guild."

"Then, I won't introduce them anymore. You should be more familiar with them," Brother Assist said.

"Brave Surge is our guild leader, as well as the Water Flower mercenary group's leader. While on the surface it appears that this mercenary group is set up to safeguard the interest of Carouse's guild members, the likely reason for its establishment is to gather the experts within the guild and form an elite team. All the skilled members, except for me, of Carouse are part of this mercenary group," Young Master Han shared.

"Since you know those people, what are you gonna do when the time comes?" Royal God Call asked.

"No one will recognize me as long as I wear a mask; I know what I have to do!" Young Master Han replied.

"Does this mean that you'll be participating in the guild versus guild tournament as well?" Brother Assist also asked him a question.

As Young Master Han nodded his head, Brother Assist looked at the others, "Besides Young Master Han, Miles, Wounds, and Royal are members of other guilds, too. I take it that you are all participating in the upcoming guild versus guild tournament?"

The three nodded their heads; War Without Wounds and Royal God Call gazed enviously at Gu Fei, "Amethyst Rebirth, right?"

Gu Fei nodded his head again, turning to look at Sword Demon, "You're not in any guild?"

"No," Sword Demon replied. Gu Fei's heart tightened. Did his past PvP with Sword Demon destroy the latter's dream of forming

the Heaven-Defying Guild, and the reason why he was distancing himself in any guild-related topics?

“Let’s not talk about guilds anymore. With regard to mercenary groups, those are the three most distinguished in Yunduan City. If we can settle those groups with just the six of us, I doubt the rest will be a problem,” Brother Assist concluded confidently.

The other five members also revealed a confident expression on their faces as if that outcome was already guaranteed; the atmosphere in the room was thick with the experts’ arrogance. People would definitely laugh until their teeth fell off if they were to find out that a mere six-person mercenary group viewed the three largest mercenary groups in Yunduan City as worthy opponents. Nonetheless, these six men continued to discuss the matter with great severity.

“Among all those groups, there is a special one.” Brother Assist swept his gaze at them all before saying, “Silver Moon.”

“Silver Moon, the guild leader of Past Deeds in Yueye City?!” Royal God Call asked in shock.

Brother Assist nodded his head, “The very same. I don’t know when he arrived in Yunduan City, but he has created a mercenary group called Symphony of the Night. Although it is just at level 2 with only forty members, I’m sure that everyone here remembers that Silver Moon possesses a skill for group buffing, so we must be on our guard toward him.”

“Got it. Pass me all the information you’ve gathered about those mercenary groups and I’ll pore over them,” Young Master Han said.

Brother Assist handed his information booklet over to Young Master Han.

“Is that all?” the other four men asked in unison. Their discussion today was actually not something that the four needed

to participate. Although planning out group tactics with more people is better, their extremely cunning group leader, Young Master Han, was so good at coming up with battle strategies and tactics that they doubted if any of their ‘brilliant’ suggestions would be accepted given his narcissistic personality.

“That’s all. You guys can go and grind more; and look for scrolls and equipment which are worth purchasing while you all are at it!” Indeed, Young Master Han clearly did not think that having four heads was better than his one head as he readily dismissed the four men.

Royal God Call invited Gu Fei to help him with his ‘Bounty Mission’ after they exited the bar; his progress had been smooth sailing that he only had thirty-one left until he hit his one-hundred-consecutive ‘Bounty Mission’. His goal was to acquire the boots before the PvP tournaments began, which was two days away. Gu Fei believed that if he spent a little more time online in these two days, he could help Royal God Call complete his quest.

As for Gu Fei himself, he would have already made it to level 40 instead of having his current “I don’t think so” status if he had not been running around and helping Royal God Call.

Bidding the others farewell and promising to help Royal God Call at a later time, Gu Fei rushed toward the Amethyst Rebirth’s headquarters. He received an urgent request for his presence from the guild while he was participating in their group meeting at Ray’s Bar, so he could only put the summon on hold by claiming that he was busy with an important matter. Asking if he was still needed at the guild once their mercenary group’s meeting ended, he surprisingly received an affirmative reply.

When he entered the Amethyst Rebirth’s guild house, he saw that a bunch of ladies was inside the room. Just as he was about to say an excuse for his late arrival, he felt a strong killing intent directed toward him.

It was obviously a Thief on Stealth since there was no one beside him. Gu Fei could not pull out his sword in time so he used his arm to firmly grasp the hidden enemy's wrist. Before the Thief could materialize, Gu Fei already restrained the person's hand holding a weapon with his left hand as he grasped the Thief's throat with his right hand and shouted at the ladies, "Stay away!"

These silly ladies actually let someone infiltrate the guild so easily, Gu Fei berated the women in his head. Sweeping the enemy with his leg, he readied himself to exert strength on his right hand to pin the person to the ground. At this moment, the figure's Stealth began to wear off on the person's descent to the floor. The person's right hand was being held in place by Gu Fei's left hand and the person's throat was being gripped by his right hand, leaving the enemy's left hand free to flail about.

Gu Fei saw the hand tearing toward him and knew that this was an instinctive reaction when falling. He wanted to dodge the wildly flailing hand, yet its speed was beyond Gu Fei's expectation. The hand gained a purchase on him firmly.

Gu Fei was very shocked. Despite his weak physique as a Mage, taking someone down with a leg hook was easy, yet this person actually retaliated by pulling Gu Fei down as well. He had no way of resolving this sudden motion. Gu Fei originally intended to release the person's throat, but his falling body and bending over legs caused his hold to tighten more instead, slamming the figure down to the floor with his body's weight.

Dirt scattered everywhere as the person was successfully pinned by Gu Fei to the ground. And yet, he was actually lamenting inside the fact that his assault barely caused any damage to the person. Moreover, his initial intention of pinning the person to the ground and taking out his sword from his dimensional pocket was thwarted by the figure's fast reaction speed.

Right now, his left hand was holding on to the assailant's right hand, which was still clutching on to a dagger, while his right hand

was choking the person's throat. Gu Fei did not have faith in his Strength and did not believe he could hold the person in place for long, so he immediately put his right knee on the person's stomach and yelled, "Xiaoyu, come here and give me a hand!"

June's Rain was a Warrior with a full-Strength build, so her one hand alone could exert more force than all of Gu Fei's four limbs combined.

However, everything remained silent. Gu Fei could even feel that the atmosphere was frigid. Lowering his head, he finally saw that the Thief on Stealth was already visible. The lady's prone figure on the ground was svelte, with her left wrist being held tightly by Gu Fei's right hand and her lower abdomen being pressed down by his right knee.

As for how the lady looked? Gu Fei did not have a clue as his tight grip on her throat had caused her face to lose all color and her features to become awry. If not for her very figure, it would be impossible to tell her gender.

Gu Fei hesitated. Left hand, right knee, right hand... He relaxed his hold on each of them. With the pressure all around her instantly lessening, the lady's grip on Gu Fei's hand also slackened. She lay spread eagled on the floor as she gasped for breath.

"What's going on?" Gu Fei asked with wrinkled brows while looking at the unfamiliar-looking lady. Although he could not recognize each of the fifty or so ladies at a glance, this lady's outstanding looks alone would surely leave quite an impression on him.

Luo Luo chuckled as she emerged from the crowd of ladies. Standing by the still prone lady's head, she lowered her own head to look at the Thief, "[Xiaowu](#), that's no good. You got pushed down by Miles with just that."

"He's too vicious!" The lady said as she continued to gasp for breath, adding, "He nearly choked me to death." She touched her

neck as she said that; Gu Fei's hand grip was visibly imprinted on it. The ladies near her were thankful that she could not see herself right now.

Gu Fei looked around him, clueless. Some of the ladies gazed at him with glee, others with surprise, and a few with wonder, yet none of them look at the lady on the ground with hostility. He asked, "What's going on?"

"Let me introduce you. This lady here just joined our guild and she's called Svelte Dancer," Luo Luo smiled.

Svelte Dancer... the historically known, mightiest pay-to-win Warrior! Young Master's Elite mercenary group members mentioned her recently. Never did he imagine that he would get to meet her in person this soon. Rich and beautiful. If Royal God Call and War Without Wounds lay eyes on her, the resulting craziness of the two would be hard to predict. Gu Fei almost lost himself in his nonsensical thoughts.

Svelte Dancer, who was still motionlessly lying on the ground, slightly lifted her right hand to wave at Gu Fei, "Hello."

"Hi..." Gu Fei helplessly replied.

"Stop playing dead and get up quickly," Luo Luo said to Svelte Dancer.

Svelte Dancer quickly sat up and glanced at her right wrist. Just like her neck, Gu Fei's hand imprint was visible on it.

"Don't mess around next time. Hiding behind the door to scare people is very dangerous," Gu Fei lectured her sincerely.

Svelte Dancer flashed him a bright smile, "I'll have to try it again, then."

"What?" Gu Fei was startled. The next thing he saw was of Svelte Dancer suddenly standing up and propelling herself toward Gu Fei with a raised dagger.

Fast! Gu Fei exclaimed to himself in shock. Svelte Dancer was clearly faster than him, be it her movement speed or hand speed, proving that her grip on him before was not by accident.

Comprehending this situation was actually not hard. After all, Svelte Dancer was dubbed as the mightiest pay-to-win Warrior. No matter how weak she was, her equipment would definitely be top grade. A body equipped with top-grade equipment from head to toe... Even the noobiest player would be reborn as a phoenix. Svelte Dancer was a Thief that had an advantage in the Agility stat. With a body full of top-grade items, it was not surprising for her speed to be faster than Gu Fei.

Nevertheless, Gu Fei did not move to dodge or evade Svelte Dancer's incoming stab. She stopped her hand mid motion and curiously gazed at him, asking, "Why aren't you fighting back?"

Xiaowu – (小舞), nickname for the new character Svelte Dancer (细腰舞,) where Wu(舞) is actually the Chinese character for 'dance'.

Chapter 138 - A Burden

“Yeah. Why aren’t you fighting back?” everyone asked as well, staring at Gu Fei in wonder.

Gu Fei could only smile at the question, saying to Svelte Dancer, “Why would I? You would be long dead if I did that...”

“D*mn you! You arrogant prick!” Svelte Dancer shrieked in annoyance.

“Woman, you’re pretty wild yourself,” Gu Fei countered, smirking.

“Come on, then! I must have a match with you for three hundred rounds today,” Svelte Dancer boldly challenged.

Gu Fei was not goaded to accepting the challenge, only asking, “You have an all-Agility build, right?”

Svelte Dancer nodded her head, “That’s right. What about it?”

Gu Fei offhandedly said, “If we are casually sparring, I might not beat you. But it’s a different case if I get serious... You might actually die from that.” He was telling the truth. The speed Svelte Dancer had shown was a lot faster than Gu Fei’s, so he was unsure if he could win in a casual melee confrontation. But if it was a serious PvP to the death, Gu Fei could just deal with her safely by maintaining a distance with her and using the chance of her closing in on him to insta-kill her directly with the Twin Incineration spell. However, there was a possibility that he could not insta-kill her with just one spell, so it would still be difficult to predict the result of the fight if Svelte Dancer managed to get close to Gu Fei. After all, she was wielding a dagger and he was using a sword; daggers were far more suitable for a combat at this short range.

Furthermore, Gu Fei’s movement speed was not as fast as hers. It would be impossible to get away once she entered his personal

space. While his movement speed was fast enough to shock people, Svelte Dancer's movement speed was even faster than his. Who knew what types of insanely OP equipment she was wearing. Boots were enough to increase a player's movement speed, so if Svelte Dancer had a body full of equipment that added to Agility, her speed would naturally reach an unprecedented height.

As for attack speed, the difference between the two was not as large as the difference in their movement speed, yet Svelte Dancer still held superiority over Gu Fei in this aspect. But to fully utilize the advantage of having a superior attack speed, one had to possess keen eyes and sharp battle sense beside having a pair of dexterous hands. Toward this point, Gu Fei fully believed that none could match up to him in his generation. He had trained for twenty grueling years, after all; the keenness of his eyes and the sharpness of his battle sense were already well-proven in his numerous in-game fights.

Gu Fei's honest words pissed off Svelte Dancer and she regarded him coldly, "Come on, then. No need for some casual sparring. Just attack me for real. It's fine if you slay me."

"Seriously?" Gu Fei pulled out Moonlit Nightfalls from his dimensional pocket with sparkling eyes.

Who could feel more strongly about PvP than Gu Fei? PvP was his intention for playing Parallel World, after all. Even if he ended up losing a level to Svelte Dancer, he would simply shrug it off as an insignificant loss. He was mainly worried that insta-killing Svelte Dancer would not be good, but everything was fine now since she did not mind that possibility.

Of course, Gu Fei only considered her as 'having a chance to win against him' in melee after he had determined that she was indeed a woman of caliber. If she was the kind of person with limited battle experience that would flaunt her weapon mindlessly during a battle, then Gu Fei was confident that he could kill her off even with bare hands.

Since this was going to be a serious fight, Gu Fei could naturally use the most effective method to confront Svelte Dancer. He believed that she would not even have the chance to get into a close enough range for the fight to be in her favor. Thinking of all this, Gu Fei assumed his fighting stance. “Well since you don’t seem to mind dying... Let’s do this, then!” Gu Fei invited.

Relishing PvP and not caring about the losses, could anyone match up Gu Fei’s calm and collected attitude due to his unique mindset in this situation? Moreover, his calmness was far too intense that it had already transformed into an attack to Svelte Dancer’s psyche.

When Svelte Dancer saw all this, her heart began to thump in trepidation. If she was not confident before, she was even more so now. After all, she was pushed down by Gu Fei moments ago. “Hmph!” Svelte Dancer harrumphed, saying, “I almost got fooled by you. How is this fair if you can slay me worry-free while I have to anxiously try my best to not kill you? You’re too cunning, indeed!”

“Nope,” Gu Fei refuted, saying, “You don’t need to stay your hand, either.”

Svelte Dancer was in tears. This beast did not even give me a chance to back down from this fight! she thought to herself furiously. Seeing Gu Fei hold a sword in his hand, she suddenly asked, “You’re a Mage, so why are you using a sword?”

“Don’t change the subject!”

“You b*st*rd! July, you’re about to talk to us regarding the guild versus guild tournament, right?”

“Hey!”

“Luo Luo, quickly bring me to that famous Ray’s Bar once we are done with the meeting!”

“Sigh... Since you’re afraid, I guess we can forget about it,” Gu

Fei sulkily kept his sword back to his pocket.

“Afraid?! Just who is afraid of whom?!” Svelte Dancer roared as she did an about face. Gu Fei had his sword magically reappearing in his hand. “Hmph! My current EXP is at 41.92; I just don’t wish to lose two levels worth of EXP! I’ll teach you a lesson once I hit level 42!” Svelte Dancer huffed in indignation.

This sounded logical. But if Svelte Dancer wanted to “teach Gu Fei a lesson”, why would she even think about the penalty of losing a level? Gu Fei found this really amusing. Sigh... Women! Keeping his sword once more, he sighed deeply, “Forget it. Let’s just leave it like this!”

Suddenly, he realized that something was not right in his surroundings. This room was filled with women besides Gu Fei, so his dejected sigh was tantamount to him asking for trouble! With that realization, Gu Fei immediately said, “Some women just can’t live up to their words. July! I think we shan’t let such people join our guild with the PvP tournament just around the corner. What if they become a burden for us during the ensuing battle?”

The people in the whole room went silent.

Svelte Dancer was one of the Five Unyielding Experts of Parallel World! To be called a burden, she was right on the precipice of breaking down but she managed to calm herself down in the end, “Hmph! Are you trying to provoke me into a fight with you? I won’t fall for your tricks.”

That was close! Gu Fei was relieved. He would not be so mean to her, especially since she was a fellow guildmate. Given the predicament he was placed into, he could only make her feel uncomfortable instead of making all the fifty or so ladies uncomfortable. It was better to make things awkward for some people than everyone else, after all.

It was a good thing that Svelte Dancer’s skill at finding herself an out was second to none. Thinking of that, Gu Fei surreptitiously

studied Svelte Dancer just as she furtively checked him out. Meeting each other's eyes, Gu Fei immediately removed his eyes on her as she indignantly turned her head away from him as well.

Only then did Amethyst Rebirth officially begin their meeting. Gu Fei felt a headache coming on as he sat through it and listened to the discussion. No one knew whether such battle preparation meetings were the same sort in MMOs or not, but July went through the various guilds in Yunduan City just like Brother Assist had done so. However, Young Master's Elite mercenary group was made up of experts; although there were just six of them, each of them was at the top of the game. Their goal was to be the champion, so Brother Assist only emphasized about Yunduan City's three strongest mercenary groups.

July was different. The strongest point of the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies was that they were low key and well aware of their shortcomings. Thus, July's presentation placed emphasis on numerous guilds that were around Amethyst Rebirth's level, making it hard to gauge when this meeting would end.

Gu Fei drifted in and out as he listened to her drone on and on about the various guilds. Just as he was about to mention something to end this mental torture, someone beat him to the punch, "A question, Elder Sis July!"

"What's the matter, Xiaowu?" The one who had raised her hand was Svelte Dancer.

"I heard that the guild versus guild tournament is elimination based. Since our opponents are chosen entirely by drawing lots, how can we be so sure that the standards of all these opposing guilds would be the same as ours?" Svelte Dancer asked.

"Of course, it won't be that coincidental. But if the guild's strength is above ours, we are obviously no match for it. If it is weaker, we will easily gain victory. What's the point of us analyzing the powerful guilds, then?" Clearly, July had given this

question much thought.

“Your thinking isn’t right,” Svelte Dancer solemnly replied, explaining, “We should view the strongest guilds as our enemies as well. If we can deal with them, we can naturally deal with all the other guilds. Your method of only having eyes for the guilds around our level, that sort of thinking is too... too....”

“Limited in making progress,” someone blurted out to help Svelte Dancer.

“That’s right!” Svelte Dancer bobbed her head in agreement, and then she suddenly realized that the voice that that had helped her belonged to a man! Turning her head and seeing Gu Fei beam at her, she immediately twisted her neck and said, “No, that’s not right. It’s passive. It’s too conservative.”

“D*mn you, woman!” Gu Fei sighed inwardly.

“So what do you think we should do?” July asked her, helpless.

“Choose two or three of the strongest guilds in Yunduan City and brief us about them. We’ll just treat them as our imaginary rivals in this upcoming tournament. What does everyone think?” Svelte Dancer even knew to seek for the crowd’s input in this matter.

There was an old saying that went: ‘Birds of the same feather flocked together.’ This was a guild that was personally set up by July, so most of the guild members actually shared her way of thinking. They were not actually that competitive, and they felt that it was not necessary to visualize mock battles with Yunduan City’s strongest guilds in preparation for what might happen soon. With nary having so much as a competitive spirit, no one dared make a sound when Svelte Dancer asked the question.

“Hmm... Xiaowu’s words do indeed make sense. If anyone else think we should do as she suggested, raise your hand,” July finally said.

Svelte Dancer looked around and did not feel so alone anymore as

some people agreed to her thinking, albeit they were just two. Upon seeing that one of them was Gu Fei, she immediately scoffed, “How can you not have any opinion of your own, simply repeating what others say....”

Gu Fei was about to have a mental breakdown at the lady’s immaturity. Seeing how she vented her anger on him at every opportunity, he could no longer be bothered with her and turned his head to look toward his fellow supporter. With a glance, Gu Fei felt that this world was truly ever-changing. The other supporter was actually Lie Lie.

These two ladies clearly had some grievances with him, so why would they actually stand with him now? Life sure was unpredictable!

July saw that the discrepancy between the two sides was incomparable, so she simply said, “If that’s the case, let’s continue learning about all these guilds that are closer to our standard. When that’s done, I’ll do a rundown of the big guilds, as well!”

Gu Fei felt like crying. At this rate, when would this meeting be over? With that, he unconsciously looked at Svelte Dancer’s direction and saw her show a distraught expression on her face as well. Geez... Seems like this lady’s thinking is completely the same as mine! What lies about visualizing a strong imaginary rival... She clearly just wants to end this meeting as well!

Chapter 139 - Afraid that the Opponent Is Weak

Gu Fei drowsily leaned against the wall as July continued to address the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies at length. It seemed that even she had also grown tired of droning on and on about the various guilds, given how they were all largely the same with one another, as she shortened her words when she reached the so-called large guilds to: "Traversing Four Seas. Level 5 guild. Seven hundred fifty members all filled up. Guild leader is Oathless Sword."

Discrimination. This is blatant discrimination! Gu Fei thought to himself. This bunch of ladies was too casual with their dealings. When it was time for them to get serious, they instead opted to breeze through it.

Nonetheless, the basic information July had provided regarding the strongest guild in Yunduan City was enough to leave all the present ladies breathless.

The Amethyst Rebirth Guild was at level 2 and only had fifty-four members, including the newcomer, Svelte Dancer. To expect these women to fight fifteen members each during this guild versus guild tournament was simply too unrealistic. Seems like visualizing an imaginary foe like Traversing Four Seas for Amethyst Rebirth is truly improbable, Gu Fei thought to himself.

Gu Fei heaved a long sigh of relief once the presentation about all the average guilds finally ended. However, July seemed to have reenergized herself by breathing out twice just like what Gu Fei had done as she continued after a short pause, "Let's now talk about the situation with the mercenary group."

Gu Fei immediately raised his hand, "July! I don't have to participate in this discussion, right?"

Before July could even say a word, Svelte Dancer took this chance to remark snidely at him, “What gives you the right to not listen? Aren’t you a member of the guild?”

“This bro right here is part of another mercenary group,” Gu Fei patted his chest as he answered. This was the first time that he had felt proud and glad to be a member of Young Master’s Elite mercenary group.

Svelte Dancer angrily retorted, “What is this?! How can you, as a member, not join this guild’s mercenary group? Is such an act allowed here? Boycott your group! Absolutely boycott your group and leave it to join our guild’s group. After that, listen to the report of Elder Sis July.”

Gu Fei was enraged. This vicious woman clearly wants to drag me down to die with her from all this mental exhaustion. Fortunately, July stepped in with impartiality, “It’s fine. Those who are not part of our mercenary group can leave first.”

Half of the ladies moved to leave in a hubbub along with Gu Fei, leaving Svelte Dancer hopping in rage.

“Xiaowu, do you plan to take part in the mercenary PvP event?” As one of the Five Unyielding Experts, of course she would be eager to participate in something like this. However, July still maintained her measured and impartial attitude when she asked this question.

“Of course, I’m joining! I’ll make sure to beat him during the mercenary PvP tournament,” Svelte Dancer declared loudly.

“Do you not have a group of your own?” someone inquisitively asked. Logically speaking, one of the Five Unyielding Experts would surely have a mercenary group of her own and there was no need to join the newly formed mercenary group of Amethyst Rebirth.

“I have, but I’ll immediately disband it!” Svelte Dancer answered.

She then looked at Gu Fei who was about to exit the door and provocatively said, “I’ll see you during the mercenary PvP tournament.”

Gu Fei smiled, “I like this idea of yours. By then, you can’t use the excuse of losing your level again to avoid PvPing me. Do your best!” Gu Fei bade her goodbye by nodding his head toward her. He then exited the Amethyst Rebirth’s guild house.

He sprinted out of the city to begin his grinding once he was out of the guild house. However, it was not peaceful for him whenever he grinded level these past few days. After fighting monsters for a bit, Royal God Call indeed sent out a cry for help to him. “Where!” Gu Fei glumly asked.

“Ray’s Bar,” Royal God Call reported. Most of the targets that required Gu Fei’s assistance were found inside taverns. After all, Royal God Call could easily dispatch the targets that were on the streets.

“There? Is there no one in our private room? Ask that person to help you!”

“There’s only Young Master Han, and he’s as useless as a fart!” Royal God Call replied.

“I’ll be right there, then.” Depressed, Gu Fei began his trip back to the city.

Gu Fei could not see Royal God Call anywhere outside Ray’s Bar when he got there. “Where are you?” He sent Royal God Call this inquiry.

“Inside the tavern!” Royal God Call answered.

Royal God Call would usually wait outside the taverns, as he could quietly take down the targets if they happened to exit the establishments, thereby eliminating the need to trouble Gu Fei. “Why’s today so different?” Gu Fei muttered under his breath as he entered Ray’s Bar.

When he swept his gaze inside Ray's Bar, he immediately felt annoyed. It was no wonder that Royal God Call was not guarding the entrance today, as he was busy merrily drinking with two ladies!

The two ladies were precisely Luo Luo and Svelte Dancer. When she was trying to change the subject previously, Svelte Dancer indeed mentioned to Luo Luo her wish to visit Ray's Bar.

Gu Fei kept his rage in check as he walked over. While the two ladies already spotted Gu Fei a meter away, Royal God Call had yet to realize his arrival! Gu Fei's anger overcame him and he stepped forward and grabbed Royal God Call, "WHERE?!"

"Ah, you're here. This person is—"

"Shut it! I already know her!" Gu Fei interrupted him angrily.

"Hmph!" Svelte Dancer turned her head away.

Gu Fei glared at her before asking Royal God Call once more, "Where?!"

"Don't be so hasty; let me have a look!" Royal God Call stretched his neck and looked around the bar. When he was intermingling with the two ladies, he inadvertently lost track of his target's whereabouts. Gu Fei decided right there and then that if the target was not in the tavern, he would slay Royal God Call instead. Luckily for Royal God Call, the target was still inside. He pointed toward a table with six players seated in it and said to Gu Fei, "That Thief over by that table."

"Ray!" Gu Fei shouted as he tossed a gold coin over.

"Ah!" A frequent customer saw Gu Fei entering the bar. Seeing his next action, the customer immediately deduced what was about to happen and exclaimed. Just as the customer had expected, Gu Fei truly darted over and kicked the table while yelling, "BOUNTY MISSION!" He was so incensed that his attitude was more violent than usual. The faces of the people occupying the table changed all

at once when Gu Fei's sword punctured their friend Thief's body.

“Shoot him!” By the time Gu Fei shouted this, Royal God Call had already fired off an arrow. The Homing Projectile navigated through the narrow gaps in the room like a go-kart and nailed itself into the Thief's forehead. The target then disappeared into a stream of white light.

This method of attacking was used by Gu Fei and Royal God Call numerous times that it could now be considered as a combo that these two well-versed experts had perfected.

The remaining five players on the table looked on with mouths agape. As their brains were still trying to process what had just happened, Gu Fei already menacingly threatened them, “Leave if you've got nothing on! You'll lose a level if you die.”

The hot-blooded players considered dropping a level a minor issue compared to losing face. Under the gazes of the people in the bar, how could they feel terrified of his warning? They felt that they should fight a few rounds at the very least before leaving, especially since two beautiful ladies were present. With such a line of thinking, the five babbled about attacking Gu Fei.

“I shan't be courteous, then!” As Gu Fei terrorized them further, he felt a gust of wind pass by his side. He then saw a figure appear right in the midst of the hot-blooded men. With a slash to the left and a cut to the right, two of the five men were instantly dispatched. The lithe figure pirouetted to one of the players' back and killed the person off with Backstab before scoring a pierce to the guy next to the person. With four dead, the figure pirouetted with daggers in hands once more. The figure's hands twirled and struck the fifth man on the back of his head with Bludgeon.

“Are you even a man? Bickering even when you're about to fight,” Svelte Dancer threw a disdainful look at Gu Fei as she used her dagger to dispose of the last man.

Royal God Call marveled with all his might, “Beautiful! You

indeed live up to your name as one of the Five Unyielding Experts!”

M*th*rf*ck*r! Gu Fei cursed vehemently in his head. She truly is an unyielding expert. She unyieldingly stole my business just like that Mage guy before!

“Hmph!” Svelte Dancer coldly harrumphed at Gu Fei as she walked back to her seat superciliously.

Only Royal God Call cheered for her inside the bar that had suddenly grown quiet. It took quite a while for the tavern patrons to snap back to their senses and begin their lively discussion. “One of the Five Unyielding Experts! Did you hear that?!”

“Svelte Dancer. It truly is Svelte Dancer!” The men leered salaciously as they hooted.

“What are you shouting for?! Haven’t you seen a beauty before?!” Svelte Dancer turned her head to glare at these men, shutting their mouths instantly. Although she was a woman, she was still one of the Five Unyielding Experts. Moreover, they had just witnessed how powerful she was with how easily she killed the five men moments ago.

“Svelte Dancer is here in Yunduan City!” All began to discuss this matter in hushed tones as they sent messages about it to their contacts all over the city.

Royal God Call continuously showered Svelte Dancer with praises for what she had just done. Although the brat would become reprehensible whenever he saw beautiful women, he was not blinded by it. Svelte Dancer’s instantaneous assault on the five men was truly far more spectacular than Drifting’s display of might.

Gu Fei knew that she was a full-Agility build character, so insta-killing other players meant that her equipment’s Attack Power must be frighteningly beyond comprehension. Anyone could also tell that she struck very concisely based on the flow of her attacks:

The two low HP Mages were done in by a basic attack each, the Warrior by Backstab, the Priest by a simple stab, and the Knight by Bludgeon and a stab. The scarier fact here was the woman's fast reaction speed. Her steps did not falter even once as she insta-killed all her opponents, completing that slew of attacks under the effect of Fleetfoot. Gu Fei saw someone use Fleetfoot to speedily deliver a stab on a person before, yet this was his first time seeing someone use Fleetfoot in a way that every step would result in an insta-kill.

This woman is really strong! Gu Fei already confirmed this. Just her reaction speed alone had already reached heights that the average human beings would never attain. It also seemed that her gaming skills were not below Sword Demon and the ilk's level of expertise. Furthermore, her ability to purchase top-grade equipment using real-world currency that others would not have access to could only be described using one word: abnormal.

"You've got moves," Gu Fei could only honestly compliment her after witnessing all that.

"Hmph. Are you afraid?" Svelte Dancer goaded.

"I'm never fearful of PvPing, except for one thing," Gu Fei replied.

"What?"

"That the opponent is weak," Gu Fei answered as he flourished his hands for effect.

"Tsk!" Royal God Call scoffed.

"Resume your quest!" Gu Fei kicked him.

Royal God Call glanced at the two beauties, fighting internally as he hesitantly walked away.

Not even two seconds had passed when Royal God Call darted back inside. Gu Fei even thought that someone seeking revenge had blocked his way out, yet he only saw Royal God Call come up

to him and excitedly whisper, “There’s another babe outside.”

Just as he said that, the door to the bar was pushed open.

“Hello, Xiaotian,” Gu Fei waved to the newcomer.

“Oh, you’re here too, Violent Fei!” Xi Xiaotian exclaimed in pleasant surprise.

Royal God Call was dumbfounded, “Is there even a woman in Yunduan City you don’t know?”

“He he! Men!” Svelte Dancer finally found a chance to use the same phrase Gu Fei had used on her earlier.

Chapter 140 - Monetary Assault

Royal God Call had the habit of freezing up whenever he saw a lady, especially a top-notch beauty like Xi Xiaotian. At this moment in time, his two legs turned jelly as he fell upon the stool behind him with a pull.

“Aren’t you doing your quest?” Gu Fei asked him.

“There’s no hurry. None at all,” Royal God Call calmly answered, adding, “There are only a few left, and I still have two more days.”

“What quest is it?” the ladies asked curiously.

“‘Bounty Mission’. Consecutively completing it for one hundred times will award you with a pair of pretty good boots. Miles, take yours off and let them have a look,” Royal God Call ordered.

Gu Fei was enraged! Royal God Call acted snappishly whenever there was a lady present. He was salivating non-stop when he saw his Windchaser’s Boots, yet it was reduced to nothing more than ‘pretty good’ right now. He even commanded Gu Fei to take off his boots.

Gu Fei knew that Royal God Call considered it a fate worse than death to lose face in front of ladies, so he swallowed his anger and took off his boots to show them to everyone.

“Are you selling them?” was Svelte Dancer’s question when she saw the Windchaser’s Boots.

Gu Fei stared at her as he slowly wore the boots once more, using his action to signify his answer to her question.

“Hmph!” Svelte Dancer pettily turned her head away, saying, “They are just a bit better than what I have, anyway.” With that, she took off her boots and showed them to everyone.

Boots of the Nimble Cloud: movement +58, increase movement speed by 35%.

“He he! Nuh-uh! It’s worse than mine by +2 movement!” Gu Fei remarked in an aggravating tone. Despite knowing that ‘+2 movement’ was largely insignificant by all counts, the bickering nature of the two parties involved made this ‘+2 movement’ seem so perfectly oppressive.

Svelte Dancer could of course not swallow this bitter pill. Nudging her Boots of the Nimble Cloud closer to Gu Fei, she said, “Why don’t you sell the boots to me at market price; I will even gift you this pair once our transaction is completed.” No market price existed for equipment as rare and as precious as the Windchaser’s Boots, which naturally meant that Gu Fei could quote a high price for them. Svelte Dancer even promised to gift Gu Fei the Boots of Nimble Cloud in return. This was as good as spending an exorbitant amount in exchange for ‘+2 movement’, clearly proving her moniker as the Mightiest Pay-to-Win Warrior. She had money to spend, after all.

The transaction was as good as a windfall from heavens even to someone like Gu Fei who had low desire with regard money, so he was momentarily moved by the offer. However, it was as good as him losing to Svelte Dancer’s monetary assault if he agreed to it. I can’t give her this chance to beat me, even if it is something this superficial, Gu Fei thought to himself as he immediately rejected her offer.

Svelte Dancer was visibly disappointed by his answer, yet she did not pester him further. Gu Fei more or less had an understanding of her personality. She was not exactly flushed with cash to the point of spending it arbitrarily on a pair of boots better than hers by a measly ‘+2 movement’. Only, her desire to win against Gu Fei was stronger than his desire to win against her, so she felt indignant that her boots were not as good as Gu Fei’s, causing her to clobber up a foolhardy plan of buying them from him outright. Sadly, that plan failed.

Sigh. Bickering with her over such a small matter... How

immature of me. Gu Fei was thinking this and was just about to agree to her proposition when Royal God Call, who was beside him, quipped, “I’m about to get this pair of boots from my quest, too. I’ll sell them to you.”

Svelte Dancer was elated, “I’m holding you to your word!”

“Of course!” Royal God Call nodded his head vigorously. Since Gu Fei did not want to pick up this sudden windfall from the heavens, Royal God Call would naturally swoop in to get it instead. He reckoned today would be so exciting that he would not be able to fall asleep later.

Gu Fei heaved a long sigh. A monetary assault was truly a frightening thing; even an innocent youngster like Royal God Call was easily corrupted by it.

To prevent the matter from getting dragged further, Royal God Call actually abandoned these ladies before him and got up, “I shall hurry and finish my quest, then.”

“Don’t you dare ask for my help!” Seeing Royal God Call’s elated expression over the turn of events, Gu Fei felt obliged to sober him up a little.

Royal God Call immediately exclaimed, “Big bro, don’t do that to me!”

That’s more like it! As Gu Fei was feeling pleased with himself, Svelte Dancer suddenly jumped in, “I’ll help you with what he’s supposed to do.”

Royal God Call was beside himself. Which god was it that was shining favorably upon him today? Not only did he make such a profitable deal, he also managed to get a beauty like Svelte Dancer to help him in his quest; it was truly a dream come true. What more could a man want if there were beauty and money? Thus, Royal God Call dismissively waved at Gu Fei, “Alright. I’ll leave you to your business, then!” With that, he left together with Svelte

Dancer. Before leaving, Svelte Dancer threw a provocative glance at Gu Fei.

“What’s happening?” Xi Xiaotian was at a loss.

“That brat is bickering with Miles,” Luo Luo chuckled.

“Why’s that?” Xi Xiaotian asked, curious.

“Miles pushed her down,” Luo Luo said without elaborating any further.

Xi Xiaotian was slightly shocked, “That’s too much!”

“Nah,” Gu Fei explained, “She tried to ambush me, so I pushed her over.”

“Sure! You pinned her down to the ground and did not let her get up,” Luo Luo added, snickering.

“That’s legit defense,” Gu Fei protested.

“Ha ha! I’m not so sure about that,” Luo Luo gazed appreciatively at Gu Fei’s embarrassment. Xi Xiaotian’s eyes were already wide like saucers.

“Come to think of it... Why did she ambush me?” Gu Fei suddenly asked.

“I’ve got something on, so I’ll take my leave first! Have fun chatting!” Luo Luo quickly got up and started to head out the door.

“Stay right there! Did you sic her into doing that?!” Gu Fei was hot on Luo Luo’s heels and the two headed out the door just like that.

Xi Xiaotian was left all alone in her seat. She was now more clueless of everything that that had unfolded before her, “Just what is going on? Why did she even ask me to meet her here?”

The weekend passed by very quickly, and the PvP tournament officially began on Monday at 7 P.M. Because many players joined a mercenary group as well as a guild, the mercenary PvP

tournament and the guild versus guild tournament would be conducted alternately. On Monday, the first event would be the mercenary PvP tournament. The six members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group were currently gathered at Ray's Bar, engaging in their final round of strategy meeting.

"The rules for the tournament have been announced," Brother Assist said, elaborating, "There's one point to note: Based on the total number of participants in this contest, a suitable map will be chosen from a selection of twelve maps available. This means that the maps are all fixed. Studying these maps should improve our odds of victory."

"Furthermore," Brother Assist continued, saying, "The limitations for a Thief's Stealth skill are announced: There is a time limit of thirty seconds and a cool-down period of three minutes for the skill, so it is impossible to play a game of hide and seek."

"Let others worry about this matter! Our goal is total victory," Young Master Han declared.

"Keep a low profile. We are just a mercenary group of six men against a group of one hundred men, how do you think what you said makes sense?" Brother Assist asked.

"With my battle strategies, this sort of problem isn't a big deal. HA HA HA HA HA!" Young Master Han laughed uproariously, looking at the time once he was done. "There's still half an hour left; is everyone good and ready?"

Before anyone could answer, the room's curtain was shoved to the side by someone rushing inside like a gale of wind. A right leg suddenly crashed upon the table as a person pointed at it, "Look what I've got!"

"Ray, what's going on?" Young Master Han gazed at Ray, who was still picking at the curtain by the room entrance.

Ray shrugged his shoulders, “Can’t help it. The price she paid me to leak your position is better than your hush money.”

“Who are you looking for?” Young Master Han wrinkled his brows and asked.

Svelte Dancer’s leg was right in front of Gu Fei, yet his lowered head did not elicit any reaction. She gave him a shove, “Oi! Are you playing dead?”

Gu Fei suddenly started, his whole body perking up, “Is the meeting over?”

Young Master Han was enraged, “You’re asleep again! You’re always sleeping in our meetings lately!”

Gu Fei showed a bitter expression on his face, “I’m so tired at hearing you all talk about rules and whatnots.”

“Ah! That’s right. It’s so unbearable!” Svelte Dancer expressed her agreement.

It was only now that Gu Fei realized that someone had her foot on the table in front of him, “You! What are you doing here?!”

“Look. My boots!” Svelte Dancer answered by pointing her boots to Gu Fei.

“I know. Royal God Call already told me,” Gu Fei answered monotonously.

All their gazes turned to Royal God Call. Young Master Han’s face had already darkened to a shade beyond black.

Brother Assist nudged Royal God Call, “Royal, wake up.”

“Ah? Are we done with the meeting?” Royal God Call perked up as he straightened his body. His reaction was just like Gu Fei’s.

“Are you all pieces of sh*t sleeping?!” Young Master Han bellowed this question.

“Sleep. Who’s asleep? Not me!” War Without Wounds quickly

answered. His eyes suddenly lingered at one spot as he abruptly got up, “Beautiful woman, how may I address you?” For him to just register Svelte Dancer’s presence now, who would believe him in his claim of not sleeping?

Brother Assist swept his gaze around and counted the people in this room, “Wait a minute. Where’s Sword Demon?” There were only six players in the room including Svelte Dancer.

“He came! I remember that he came!” Brother Assist insisted.

“Mhm-mhm. He was beside me just now. When did he leave?” Royal God Call said as he patted the empty seat next to him. “OH!” Royal God Call exclaimed in shock the next instant.

With that, a figure slowly appeared from the seat as Sword Demon calmly said, “I’m here.”

“Sleeping while on Stealth! That’s too cunning!” The three other men berated Sword Demon as Young Master Han sent a death stare their way.

Actually, they could not prove that Sword Demon had been sleeping while on Stealth. But given Sword Demon’s honest personality, he did not make an excuse for himself and just asked, “Is the meeting over?”

Young Master Han’s glass of alcohol had already been drained, while Brother Assist’s face was helplessly affixed with a wry smile.

“Is this your mercenary group?” Svelte Dancer asked Gu Fei.

Gu Fei nodded his head.

“They are all over the place; you should just join our guild’s mercenary group, instead!” Although she was discontented with and harbored resentment toward Gu Fei, she evidently still considered him as a talented individual. As for the other members of Young Master’s Elite, she treated them as a bunch of rabbles.

The reactions of these five experts were worth relishing.

Brother Assist simply smiled without uttering a word. Royal God Call would usually go up and boast about his prowess in such moments, yet he opted to act mysterious instead since the person who had said this was a female. War Without Wounds adopted a congenial expression similar to Royal God Call's. Sword Demon merely stared at Svelte Dancer, not saying a word. As for Young Master Han, he actually stilled his expression of rage moments before and smiled amiably, "How should I address you, miss beautiful? Which mercenary group are you from?"

"Svelte Dancer; Amethyst mercenary group," Svelte Dancer answered.

"Oh. I guess we'll meet in the tournament, then!" Young Master Han said cheerfully.

"Oh..." Svelte Dancer suddenly felt that the atmosphere was very odd. She originally wanted to persuade Gu Fei some more, but she decided to keep her mouth shut and reply to Young Master Han with just one word before taking her leave.

Chapter 141 - Slow or Fast

The players participating in the mercenary PvP tournament gathered at the square outside the Hall of Mercenaries' entrance with ten minutes left before 7 P.M. Official statement stated that a teleportation array would send these players into their respective PvP arenas.

Players who had the participation-was-more-important-than-the-result mindset showed their high level of responsibility at this point and, as long as they were part of mercenary groups, made sure to participate in the PvP tournament. As such, the square was crowded with players like canned sardines and even the many roads leading to the square were filled with people.

The current scene naturally made the game company of Parallel World extremely exhilarated. At this moment, the game officials sent an emergency system announcement: [With this being the first round of the mercenary PvP tournament on the first day of the event, the amount of players participating has hit the maximum limit and exceeded our estimation. There will hereby be an extension to the time each player will take to enter his or her PvP arena. Can the players please hurry?]

The players, including the six members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group, voiced their complaints when they heard this. The six had gotten separated from one another on their way to this square. Gu Fei discovered that the crowd had somehow been divided based on the players' Strength, with the stronger ones being able to squeeze their way to the front and the weaker ones like himself naturally being pushed to the back of the line to wait for much longer. Before he knew it, all the players around him were now made up of weak Mages that looked as if they could be killed with just a lift of a finger. "Where are you guys?!" Throwing this question on the mercenary channel, Gu Fei saw that the other five men were also asking this same question.

In the blink of an eye, it was already 7 P.M., yet Gu Fei had not even advanced one step forward. It was at this point that the game officials finally permitted the players to enter their respective maps.

The human traffic started to flow. The players within the square started disappearing one by one in bright lights as they went through the teleportation array, allowing the players at the back to move forward and take the vacated spaces in front. Ten minutes later, the system sent another announcement: [Due to the current special circumstance in this first round, there will not be any time limit to entering the maps. All players may take their time to enter the teleportation array.]

“I’m in.” The first one among Young Master’s Elite to arrive at the teleportation array was actually Young Master Han.

“How’s that possible?!” Gu Fei exclaimed in shock. “Logically speaking, War Without Wounds should get there first!”

“It’s seduction! Seduction!” Royal God Call resolutely stated, making Gu Fei wonder if he had been the victim of seduction himself.

Gu Fei went into deep thought. Given Young Master Han’s astonishingly beautiful looks, pretending to be a woman would be far too easy for him. He reckoned that the other players must have mistaken Young Master Han as a beautiful lady and demonstrated their chivalrous spirit by effortlessly allowing him to afford of their ‘ladies first’ practice.

“The opposing mercenary group seems to have finished with its preparation.” Having entered the map, Young Master Han reported accordingly, “It’s just one man!”

This was not a rarity. Quite a number of players enjoyed playing the game by themselves, so quite a number of mercenary groups had only one member. Thus, bumping into this sort of mercenary groups in the first round was a common occurrence.

The ensuing messages sent by Young Master Han's fellow members on the mercenary channel had the same content: "I'm not going, then."

"B*st*rds!" Young Master Han cursed on the mercenary channel. No matter how much of an expert he was as a Priest, he did not possess the necessary power to kill off his opponents, even if said opponent was alone. Upon closer inspection, he realized that only four messages of "I'm not going, then" had arrived on the mercenary channel. This meant that someone among the members had not said a word about this matter.

"Miles?" Young Master Han gingerly probed. The matter at hand was precarious; although Young Master Han was the leader on paper, everyone was of equal standing in the mercenary group. Therefore, Young Master Han could not oblige anyone to do his bidding. Since four had already declined to go and were nowhere to be seen, the Priest Young Master Han would have to face the opponent by himself if Gu Fei declined as well.

Thankfully, Gu Fei was someone who would not pass up any chance to PvP and immediately sent a positive reply, "I'll go!"

Young Master Han exhaled hugely in relief. With fear still lingering in his heart, he coldly said to the others, "I'm gonna remember what you four did here."

"TSK!" The four scoffed at his empty threat.

Gu Fei had no way of squeezing through the crowd, so he could only follow the motion of the people and move closer bit by bit to the teleportation portal. Half an hour had passed by the time he finally got to the teleportation array and entered the respective map.

A blue sky, white clouds, an unending field, and Young Master Han were what greeted Gu Fei when he entered the map.

"Let's begin!" Young Master Han said impatiently.

Originally, the match would automatically begin at the appointed time for the mercenary PvP tournament. Due to the removal of the time restriction for players to enter their respective PvP arenas, the official time for the PvP tournament to start was canceled as a corollary. Each match would now begin once the system received the application of both parties stating that they were done with their preparations.

Once Gu Fei nodded his head, Young Master Han promptly handed in their group's application and the system immediately began a five-second countdown. When the timer reached zero, white lights flashed and the two were sent to their real PvP arena.

Compared to the plain and simple field from before, the map they were in now was much more lush and abundant. Since only three people were participating in this battle, they were assigned the smallest PvP arena in the tournament. The terrain had highs and lows, water and trees, and birds flying among the many clouds in the sky. High hills were designated as the boundary for this map, reaching steepness of ninety degrees.

"Over there," Young Master Han pointed somewhere in front of him as he observed the map.

As this map was very small, the two could clearly see the four sides of the boundary surrounding them and their opponent standing no more than two hundred meters away from them.

Originally, this sort of single-member mercenary groups had the strongest participation-was-more-important-than-the-result mentality, as they essentially stood no chance of victory unless they met other single-member mercenary groups, but when the opponent saw that he was up against two players in this match, he felt that he still stood a fighting chance. Rushing forward with confident steps, the opponent arrived at a land depression and quickly disappeared from the two's line of sight.

"Let's go!" Gu Fei pulled out his sword.

“Mhm!” Young Master Han agreed, following behind him.

The two immediately caught sight of the player hiding in the depression. Gu Fei and Young Master Han were dressed in their respective job classes, allowing the opponent to tell at a glance that one was a Mage and the other was a Priest.

The opposing player was a Warrior. After identifying the two's job classes, the hopeful thought he had in his mind intensified. If the Warrior had been up against melee job classes with a Priest in tow, he might have discarded his hopes of winning the match. Since it was a Mage and a Priest, he only needed to engage them in melee. With the Mage's inherently low HP, the Priest beside him would surely not be able to sustain his life for long.

Gu Fei proceeded forward ever so slowly as he was matching Young Master Han's walking pace. Halfway there, Young Master Han suddenly said, “Go ahead and finish him off; I'll head up that hill and take a look around.”

“What's there to see?” Gu Fei asked, not understanding why the other would do something as troublesome as going up a hill.

“I'm going up to check the topological terrain of this map. The official website did not release any information about the twelve PvP arenas. Although this is the smallest map, I think it still has features similar to the other PvP tournament maps. By climbing up that higher landmass, I can get a better read of this whole place,” Young Master Han explained as he once again pointed to the spot he had previously indicated.

“Go on, then!” Gu Fei said, completely not understanding what Young Master Han was on about.

The Warrior, who was still hiding in the pit, was overcome with elation when he discovered that the two opposing players had split up. He wholly thought that the two could not find him, so the Priest headed to a higher ground to search for him up there. One going to look on a higher ground and the other one continuing to

search on the leveled ground... The Warrior thought that this was a fatal mistake and quietly ridiculed the two noobs as he retracted his neck from his hiding place. He had already ascertained which higher ground Young Master Han was heading. Deciding to eliminate the Priest first, the Warrior retreated from his current position and used a different route to head to the Priest's intended destination.

To prevent himself from getting discovered, the Warrior crouched so low that he was practically crawling on the ground as he made his way toward the location.

Everything was going very smoothly. Taking a different route, the Warrior arrived somewhere on the other side of the higher ground. He stretched his head to take a look and spotted Young Master Han sitting at a vantage point and looking left and right from time to time.

"Don't turn around. Don't turn around. Definitely do not turn around!" The Warrior repeated this mantra in his head as he carefully made his way up the hill.

It was a pity that he was a Warrior and not a Thief, so he could not help but make loud, clanking noises with his heavy armor no matter how careful he proceeded forward. It was quiet all around him, so the armor's clanking sound was even more piercing to the ears. The Warrior felt it was impossible for him to quietly make his way into melee range at this rate. Suddenly, it dawned on him that he was only dealing with a Priest, a non-combat job class. Therefore, why would he need the defensive properties of his equipment? Thinking of this, he immediately took off his armor, pulled out his claymore, and made his way toward Young Master Han.

Without the armor, the Warrior could now proceed forward with ease. His heart could not help but sing with elation at the prospect of winning this match.

Thirty meters, twenty meters, ten meters... The Warrior got closer to Young Master Han with every step he took. This is great! After dealing with this fella, I'll find another pit to hide in to deal with that Mage next! The Warrior was beside himself with happiness when he was just five meters away from the Priest, as if victory was well within his grasp. Three meters! I can begin my attack at this distance! The Warrior licked his lips as he raised his claymore with both hands toward Young Master Han. Just as he was about to activate the Charge skill, someone from behind him suddenly tapped his shoulder.

The Warrior was instantly petrified as he turned around half a beat later.

A Mage in black robe stood there.

The Warrior opened his mouth without making a sound, as he was still trying to maintain his silence to initiate his ambush! Realizing that his ambush would no longer succeed, the Warrior finally found his voice. "You... How did you...."

"I'm your opponent," Gu Fei said plainly.

"Is... Is... this a trap?" the Warrior asked rigidly.

"Of course not," Gu Fei said. He then asked Young Master Han aloud, "Are you done with your map research?"

"Almost," Young Master Han replied.

"He's about to finish; quickly put on your armor!" Gu Fei said to the Warrior.

"What?" The Warrior was absolutely flabbergasted at this point.

"Our fight will be better if you're wearing your armor. Look at you now; what sort of defense do you even have?" Gu Fei patiently explained.

At this moment, Young Master Han stood up and turned around with wrinkled brows, "Stop nagging already and just finish this

quickly.”

“You’re the one who wanted me to slow down; now, you want me to move things faster; why is it so difficult to please you?!” Gu Fei muttered to himself.

“What do you two mean?” the Warrior asked, still rooted to the spot in his shock.

“Oh. He wanted to take a look at the map, so he asked me to take it easy beating you. That’s why I followed you all the way without doing anything. Sorry about that!” Gu Fei explained.

You’ve been behind me all this time?” the Warrior asked, shocked.

Gu Fei nodded his head, “All this time.”

The Warrior looked at Gu Fei and then at Young Master Han. One had a look of expectation, while the other was simply impatient. “What is this?” the Warrior asked as his hands dropped to his sides, losing his will to fight.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Gu Fei suddenly struck; the flame orb glowed for a moment, insta-killing the Warrior.

“Why must you use Cyclone?!” Mistaking the Warrior’s movement as preparation to use Cyclone, Gu Fei dejectedly casted the Twin Incineration spell. He continued berating the Warrior who had already disappeared, “Weren’t you forcing me to insta-kill you by using Cyclone? Wouldn’t it be nice if we could fight slowly?”

In the next instant, the two were enveloped by white lights and were sent outside the PvP arena.

Round 1 winner: Young Master’s Elite mercenary group.

Chapter 142 - Lack of Formidable Guildmates

“How are the rewards?” Young Master Han asked Gu Fei once they were teleported out of the PvP arena.

“They are alright,” Gu Fei gave the EXP and gold coins that they had just earned a quick glance. Since this was the first match, the rewards were just average. After all, the awards, as well as the odds of getting special rewards, would only become better the further they got into the PvP tournament. These rare, special awards were of course the most desirable rewards that the ambitious tournament participants all sought after.

Since Gu Fei got stuck at the end of the line previously, he entered the map a bit too late. He also tracked the opposing Warrior for quite some time. Therefore, a majority of the first batch of matches of the mercenary PvP tournament had long ended by the time the two got out of the map. Besides the steady stream of players being teleported back from their respective PvP arenas, few people were in the square.

Royal God Call and War Without Wounds, who were cheekily leaning by a wall near the teleportation array, began to clap loudly when they saw Gu Fei and Young Master Han step out of the teleportation portal, “Not bad! You two got off with a flying start.”

Young Master Han’s face was dark as he asked, “Where is Sword Demon and Brother Assist?”

“Sword Demon went to grind while Brother Assist went offline to check the forums,” Royal God Call replied.

The guild versus guild tournament was the next portion of the event, and Sword Demon and Brother Assist were not participating in that.

“How much EXP did you guys receive?” Royal God Call asked as

he came next to Gu Fei.

Gu Fei reported the numbers and Royal God Call happily said, "He he! Seems like I received free lunch, after all! But we got less EXP compared to you two who have directly participated in the match." As long as they were online, rewards from either the mercenary PvP tournament or guild versus guild tournament would be given to all members of the winning teams even if they did not participate in the matches. Some of the players who had no particular interest in joining mercenary groups tried their best to become part of large mercenary groups to partake in these free rewards. Unfortunately for them, the mercenary groups with actual strength had long reached their maximum member limit and there was no room in them for players who only wanted free meals during this PvP tournament.

The four chatted gamely as they headed toward the Main Hall of Guilds. The teleportation array for the guild versus guild tournament was located at the plaza outside the Main Hall of Guilds. Considering that there were more participants for this portion of the event compared to the mercenary PvP tournament, the time limit for entering the PvP arenas had of course been canceled as well. The four men naturally got separated from one another once more, as they were now up against a crowd far more denser than the throng of people outside the Hall of Mercenaries.

With everyone jostling and pushing about, Gu Fei once more found himself at the very back of the sea of players. He could feel his heart raging inside and nearly casted Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno to carve a path out. In fact, the Mages beside him had a similar idea! The burgeoning resentment seemed to have coagulated upon the heads of all the present Mages as dark clouds ominously blanketed their very thoughts.

The originally appointed time for the start of the guild versus guild tournament was at 9 P.M., but the game officials had to make an adjustment once more due to the large bulk of players. The

teleportation array was opened without a restriction, allowing the match to start once both parties finished their preparations and ending it immediately once the match ended. The mass of players kept moving, yet almost an hour passed before Gu Fei managed to enter the teleportation array.

Cerulean sky, white clouds, vast field. The scenery the players first found themselves in seemed to be the designated map for the guilds' preparation phase.

In sporting terms, this place the players were first transported in to prepare for their matches was akin to the changing room or locker room found in basketball or other sporting arenas. Gu Fei swept his gaze over this map for preparation and his thoughts went astray for a bit when he saw the pack of ladies nearby.

“Forty-seven!” July announced when she spotted Gu Fei as well, saying, “We’re missing three more members.” Although the event was something everyone looked forward to, there were always some players who would have all sorts of reasons to not make it. Out of the Amethyst Rebirth’s fifty-four members, four did not come online tonight.

“What’s the situation with our opposing guild?” Gu Fei asked.

“Unbeatable under the Heavens. A level 1 guild with fifty members all filled up,” July replied.

July considered level 1 and level 2 guilds as key opponents of the level 2 Amethyst Rebirth Guild with its fifty-four members. This was one of the guilds she had talked about lengthily before. Since Gu Fei was daydreaming at the time, he registered none of the information about the said guild.

“Everyone, how do you think we should fight that guild?” July asked.

July, who was a guild leader, was being very impartial and inclusive at the moment, even asking for everyone’s opinion. Gu

Fei had the impression of her being more like a spokesperson of Amethyst Rebirth rather than its guild leader. Although this was just a game and a guild leader should not be so serious about his or her position, it was still necessary for one to have the disposition of a leader.

An example was the guild battle right now; a guild leader must command his or her members with confidence. Even if the command was poor, it would still be better than a scattered and directionless battle strategy. It was therefore somewhat inappropriate of July to gather everyone's input in an important time like this. This sort of leader would definitely have great difficulty in achieving anything in a different guild other than Amethyst Rebirth. Although such a guild leader was well-received in Amethyst Rebirth, that might just be because of the agreeable personality of the ladies.

It was at this moment that Luo Luo opined, "Why don't we split into small teams? Let us split our members into two small teams like how we do it during level grinding, since we will be more familiar with coordinating with one another."

This was not a particularly exciting idea. Just look at Luo Luo's grinding party that was mostly made up of Mages; if these Mages were to engage the opposing guild, would they not just be painting themselves as a large target? Although Gu Fei considered Luo Luo to have the better qualities of a guild leader, it was only because he preferred her personality and way of doing things over July's. Nonetheless, she was still just an average player when it came to formulating battle strategies.

With that, all turned their gazes toward Svelte Dancer who was currently meticulously polishing her dagger. As one of the Five Unyielding Experts, what sort of brilliant idea would she come up with?

"Xiaowu, do you have any opinions?" July asked her directly.

“Opinion? Mm. Just kill opponents straight away. Everything will be over once they die,” Svelte Dancer said matter-of-factly, not even pausing what she was doing.

Ha ha ha... Gu Fei laughed to himself. It seemed like the Five Unyielding Experts could only be proud of their high level. This woman was stronger than most people, yet she knew nothing about battle strategies and the ilk! She’s just a gutsy Warrior without any knowledge of strategies, Gu Fei thought disparagingly.

“Miles, how about you?” July suddenly turned to ask Gu Fei.

“Ah!” Gu Fei froze up. Now that it was his turn to be asked, he tried hard to come up with a brilliant battle strategy, yet he could only blushingly say in the end, “Just kill them outright!”

Gu Fei was crying inside his mind, Turns out I am no better than Svelte Dancer; we are only good at one thing. In the end, we are just like Leeroy Jenkins. However, Gu Fei should not be blamed for this, as it did not mean that an intelligent person would surely be able to devise a great battle strategy. Knowledge and understanding of the various job classes’ fortes, methods of combat, and fighting styles were needed for a player to come up with a brilliant battle strategy.

For example, Gu Fei qualified to be called a top-notch solo player that could brave dangers in a RPG. When it came to commanding, however, it would require an expert well-versed in all sorts of strategy games.

The ladies were weak at commanding precisely because they usually had no interest in such strategy games. Gu Fei reckoned that out of all the ladies that he knew in this game, only Vast Lushness appeared to at least have a bit of knowledge about battle strategies. At the very least, her orders had been pretty good during that battle on the street when Gu Fei was taking revenge for Will-low.

As for the Amethyst Rebirth’s fifty members here, not one

seemed to possess talent in this strategizing part of the game. In the end, the proposed battle plan was: rush together toward the enemies and overwhelm them through sheer number.

Such a crude and simple battle tactic! It was as good as not saying anything at all, yet this group of ladies sincerely nodded their heads as if they had received some sort of excellent strategy!

If Amethyst Rebirth wished to go far in this event, it seemed that they would have to rely upon the might and heroism of an indomitable player or players.

Hero number 1 Svelte Dancer finished polishing her dagger and, after lovingly caressing it for a bit, hung it by her waist as she looked at Gu Fei, “Let’s see who has the higher kill count!”

Hero number 2 Gu Fei smiled as he pulled out his sword, Moonlit Nightfalls.

“Preparation complete!” July submitted her application at this point. The opposing team had already been waiting for them for a long time. The scenery around them changed as everyone was teleported from the ‘changing room’ into the real PvP arena.

Unbeatable under the Heavens had fifty members but five of them did not show up for this match. These two guilds combined had ninety-five players, so the PvP arena Gu Fei found himself in now was much larger than the one he and Young Master Han had been placed in for the mercenary PvP match. At the very least, he could not see the enemies at a glance from their location.

“Advance forward!” July ordered.

The ladies swayed their hips in a carefree way as they ran across the field, laughing, joking, frolicking, and chasing after one another.

“Faster!”

“No. You slow down!”

The ladies laughed and shouted uncaringly as they advanced forward, not caring if some players ran fast or slowly. This resulted into them drifting apart the further they went forward. Svelte Dancer, with her amazing running speed, activated Fleetfoot all the way through and immediately disappeared into the horizon. Gu Fei kindly matched his pace to the Priests, thinking he needed to protect them with their inherently slow movement speed. In the end, he just became a target for Luo Luo's constant bestowal of Heal.

"This is a PvP match! Be serious and stop wasting your mana!" Gu Fei admonished.

"Ha ha! I'm just joking; why so serious?" Luo Luo asked as she ate a banana to replenish her mana.

F*ck! Their participation-is-more-important-than-the-result mentality is at the extreme! Gu Fei saw how the ladies were acting so carefree as if they were on a tour and not a PvP match. While they did not approach this matter with winning in mind and more of enjoying themselves to the fullest, Gu Fei was different. He was hoping that Amethyst Rebirth could fight a few more rounds, so that he could have more chances of slaying people! At this rate, won't we just get eliminated in this round? Guess I must depend on myself, with that thought in his mind, Gu Fei no longer stayed around with this lot of plodding Priests as he broke off into a sprint, leaving the lot of ladies behind in the blink of an eye.

After running for a while, Gu Fei saw Svelte Dancer prone by a small mound ahead, peeking over as if she was checking something out. Gu Fei hurried over and lay sprawled on the ground beside her. He peeked out his head and asked, "What are you looking at?"

"You're so slow!" Svelte Dancer mocked Gu Fei.

"Of course, you're a Thief," Gu Fei answered.

["You're a Mage? Eh... Ha ha! You're sh*t!"](#) Svelte Dancer laughed at the bad joke she had stumbled upon unintentionally.

Gu Fei did not bother answering her as he had already taken the situation in from beneath the mound. Before them, the Unbeatable under the Heavens Guild was slowly moving its troops around; the formed teams were maintaining a formation, with the Warriors at the vanguard, the Mages and Archers at the center, and the Thieves and Priests at the rear. Knights were split into the two wings of this formation as they constantly refreshed the stat buffs that they had placed on their fellow members. The rare and few Fighters in the guild were casually filling in the gaps of the formation.

Look at how professional they are compared to those ladies! Gu Fei frustratedly thought to himself. If the opposing guild's formation were to clash with the Amethyst Rebirth's scattered formation, the outcome would be less than suspenseful.

"How long are you gonna lie here and watch? Let's start the killing!" Gu Fei said as he jumped up the mound and pointed his Moonlit Nightfalls forward, shouting, "Blazing Tree—"

"Are you mad?!" Svelte Dancer dove after Gu Fei, swiftly tackling him down to the ground.

The sound of several arrows piercing through air was heard as they went past the mound.

"That enemy guild has long prepared an ambush and is just waiting for our guild to show up!" Svelte Dancer exclaimed.

"Is that so? You better get off me quickly, then," Gu Fei said to Svelte Dancer who lay sprawled over him.

Svelte Dancer was incensed, "I have yet to mention how you force me to get so physically close to you!"

"Look above you," Gu Fei did not know if he should laugh or cry at what she had just said. Why are people's thoughts always so filthy?

Svelte Dancer extended her neck upward and saw above them

that the air seemed to rumble out of nowhere and tear apart instantly as countless flaming dragons erupted out of thin air before they turned into burning circles similar to wheels.

DESCENDING WHEEL OF FLAMES!

The joke here is a Chinese homophone. 师 (one of the characters for ‘mage’) sounds similar to 屎 (the character for ‘poop’).

Chapter 143 - The Incantation that Turns the Tide

“AH!” Svelte Dancer screamed as she hurriedly rolled away from Gu Fei to the side. Gu Fei dexterously used his one hand, which was planted to the ground, to tumble toward the side as well.

The flaming wheel slightly brushed against Gu Fei’s body on its way to the mound that they were originally on, looking like an upturned egg tart caught on fire.

“Run quickly!” Svelte Dancer called out to Gu Fei.

Gu Fei nodded his head. He had just realized that the fight today was different from his fights in the past. The ‘Bounty Mission’ he had previously accomplished was technically done through ambushing his targets. Even if he warned the targets prior to his attacks, the targets would still be caught by surprise and would never be able to deal with him in such a grand and proper manner like their opposing guild today.

With over forty players in the Unbeatable under the Heavens’ formation, the level of concentration that these players were showing right now was vastly different from the level of concentration of Gu Fei’s ‘Bounty Mission’ targets who were usually grinding on monsters or drinking inside the taverns. These current opponents treated anything foreign in their line of sight as a target to be eliminated. Would the usual level grinders have this level of alertness?

Svelte Dancer and Gu Fei ran as fast as they could for a few meters before looking backward and seeing that the opponents had already rushed toward the mound.

“Let’s try to break up their formation by luring the faster ones over to us!” Gu Fei said to Svelte Dancer.

The lady nodded her head as the two began to slow down. Had

they continued to run at their full speed, the enemies chasing them would have simply been left in the dust. Would the enemies still give chase to these two given how fast they were at full speed?

And yet, no one seemed to be rushing toward them even though they were now running at a slower pace. The opponents unexpectedly remained calm and continued to maintain their formation. Ascending the small mound and making their way toward the two with a steady pace, they evidently did not intend to mess up their formation.

“They’re not fooled!” Gu Fei sighed. That was the difference between having a good battle commander and not having any at all. Would real armies and soldiers emphasize so much on following orders and commands if those actions were meaningless?

The two were not sure if they should continue to run or not now that their plan of breaking up the enemies’ formation had failed. The enemies continued to steadily edge closer to them as they stared blankly at the tidy formation.

“Use your spells to cover me. I’m going in!” Svelte Dancer said to Gu Fei as she took out her dagger.

“You sure you could pull it off?” Gu Fei asked this question sincerely, yet it instead ended up inciting Svelte Dancer’s fighting spirit.

“Just you watch!” Svelte Dancer hollered as she activated Fleetfoot and bounded toward the enemies.

“Ah! Slow down!” Gu Fei chased after her. His speed was regrettably nowhere near Svelte Dancer’s, so he was very quickly left behind by her. How the heck was he going to cover her at this rate?

It turned out that Svelte Dancer’s speed had also shocked their enemies, as the Archers with bows drawn and Mages with raised

staves that were planning to launch long-range attacks remained rooted to the spot when the lone figure hurtled straight toward them on Fleetfoot at an unbelievable speed.

Truly, the proverb ‘An onlooker could see more than the involved party’ held some truth. In this current situation, the ones not directly in charge of things managed to see everything clearly. “Hurry up and attack! What are you all staring blankly for?!” shouted such an onlooker, snapping the Archers and Mages out of their shock to initiate their attacks.

But there were only few Archers in the opposing guild’s formation that was made up of forty-five men with its balanced assortment of the seven job classes, so they could not rain arrows on the target. Svelte Dancer nimbly whirled her dagger defensively, not allowing even one arrow to strike her. In the next moment, the Mages unleashed their spells. Since none of the Archers’ arrows scored a hit on the target, the Mages decided to cast AOE spells, such as Descending Wheel of Flames and Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno, instead of Fireball that had a slow tracking speed. The flames of the casted spells acted as a cordon between Svelte Dancer and the troops. She almost got bombarded to death by the enemies when she charged toward them, but she was able to stop herself in time just before she stepped into the AOE of the enemies’ spell. At the next moment, she saw a few flashes of white light from the enemies’ line; it seemed that Homing Projectile had been employed by the Archers on their arrows.

Homing Projectile’s speed, as well as its damage output, was not comparable to Snipe, yet its tracking effect was deadly. Svelte Dancer turned around to run. When compared to the other players, her movement speed was impossibly fast, but the arrows on Homing Projectile currently after her were still faster. Moreover, Fleetfoot was on its cool-down period right now, so she could only run at her normal speed, resulting in those projectiles

to home close to her bum.

At this same moment, Gu Fei finally managed to catch up to Svelte Dancer who had left him behind. He burst into a bout of raucous laughter when he saw her rush toward the opposing guild's formation only to hurriedly sprint backward.

“Cover! Where is my cover fire?!” Svelte Dancer criticized Gu Fei as she ran, even turning around to check how far the arrows on Homing Projectile were on her. One way of dodging these arrows was to maintain her distance from them until the skill lost its effect.

Gu Fei stepped forward and raised his Moonlit Nightfalls, swiftly cutting down an arrow on Homing Projectile. Analysis determined that an Archer's attack was the easiest in-game skill to disrupt.

Theoretically speaking, the attacks of Archers were the easiest to disrupt because they had fast speed to compensate for this. Svelte Dancer glanced backward to note the direction of the arrows on Homing Projectile tailing her, only to receive a shock at the sight of Gu Fei easily disrupting the projectiles until only one was left.

If Svelte Dancer were the one currently deflecting the arrows on Homing Projectile instead of Gu Fei, she would only be confident enough to deal with one or two of them. Otherwise, she would not be running like this right now. With only the final arrow left, Svelte Dancer stopped in her tracks and turned around to strike it down.

Svelte Dancer assumed that Gu Fei could easily deflect the arrows because they were not targeting him. She believed this to be the only logical explanation for such a feat.

Meanwhile, their current predicament seemed to have no solution, seeing as the two of them were up against forty-five opposing players. “Help me block the arrows!” Suddenly, Gu Fei shouted this at her as she was pondering on the best course of action for them.

“Ah?” Svelte Dancer asked, stunned. Looking at Gu Fei, she saw him steadily pointing his Moonlit Nightfalls on to the enemies’ ranks unmindful of the several arrows heading his way.

Svelte Dancer did not have time to ruminate more about this and just quickly darted to Gu Fei’s side to defend him from the arrows. In an instant, she snapped four arrows with a wave of her dagger. Although two arrows embedded themselves into her body, Svelte Dancer managed to survive them due to her OP equipment.

“Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!” Blocking that wave of arrows was sufficient for Gu Fei to finish his incantation.

Various spells had different rules for casting. For instance, the two AOE spells, Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno and Descending Wheel of Flames, required Mages to remain stationary while casting them. Otherwise, the spells would get disrupted immediately. Furthermore, spells were not bounded by a time limit, and the incantations would only be considered as complete once Mages finished chanting them.

Pronouncing the words clearly was a must as well. If the incantation was said in a rush, the system would not detect it. This was as good as not chanting an incantation to begin with. If Jay Chou were a Mage in Parallel World, he would most likely be the worst Mage there was.

Gu Fei’s speech was intelligible; his words were well pronounced and his chanting speed was suitable. Since the attacks in him were successfully blocked by Svelte Dancer, there was no reason for his incantation to fail. However, it was just one mage spell so the opposing side did not consider it a threat as they steadily advanced toward Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer while the enemy Archers, Mages, and other long-range job classes continued to unleash attacks upon the two.

“Evade! What are you standing there in a daze for?!” Gu Fei, who was about to make a dash for it, saw Svelte Dancer still standing

there foolishly.

Svelte Dancer hurried to Gu Fei's side as she asked blankly, "Where's your spell?"

Gu Fei smiled faintly as he snapped his fingers. Flames blossomed and exploded as a raging inferno erupted. The team of forty-five men looked as if it had stepped onto a huge landmine and was very quickly enveloped by the sea of flames.

"Sigh. They didn't evade it!" Svelte Dancer exclaimed in dismay.

Gu Fei was momentarily mystified, asking "Whose side are you on? What is so bad about them not evading?"

"But—" Svelte Dancer was about to say that the opposing guild's formation would be in a mess if they had evaded his spell, yet no words came out of her mouth in the end.

All that was left of Gu Fei's Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno on the field was some glowing embers, burning a big hole through the Unbeatable under the Heavens' formation. The leftover enemies were shocked and perplexed, their eyes filling with horror. The Priests at the rear of the now disrupted formation were even more at a loss over what had just happened. They were originally planning to bestow Heal on their guildmates, yet those guildmates ended up being insta-killed by the searing inferno.

"Go on!" Gu Fei waved Svelte Dancer onward, having already charged toward them himself. He merely casted Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno on a whim. Gu Fei's first love when it came to PvPing was still melee or directly confronting the enemies with his sword, after all.

"Hey, you..." Svelte Dancer had clearly never seen a Mage that headed straight into the thick of the fray like this before. Sadly, she only managed to utter these two words before she was left in the dust by Gu Fei who had already rushed toward the enemies himself.

Svelte Dancer could only chase after him. The Unbeatable under the Heavens' players had yet to recover from their shock, but the two full-Agility build demons were already upon their ranks in the next moment.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Gu Fei casted another spell that could insta-kill the others right from the start. Although his Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno managed to insta-kill half of the troops here, the ensuing two versus over twenty players still exerted quite the pressure on Gu Fei – or at least, the fight was not yet at the point where he could toy on his opponents.

The slash under Twin Incineration he had unleashed went through three players and killed two right away. The last person was a Priest and he only got burned by the spell and did not suffer Moonlit Nightfalls' physical damage, allowing him to barely cling on to his life.

Svelte Dancer finally arrived at where they were and immediately unleashed an equally oppressive attack as Gu Fei's. She brandished her dagger into a fast blur and quickly disposed of two opponents. Gu Fei sent another slash on Twin Incineration and slew two more enemies.

It was only now that the enemies finally reacted. Abandoning all thoughts of maintaining their formation, the remaining players charged toward the two and encircled them haphazardly. Gu Fei's Twin Incineration took down another player and stepped backward until his back was almost leaning against Svelte Dancer's. “Hey. You okay over there?”

“If you can do it, why can't I?” Svelte Dancer retorted.

“Alright, then. Hold on for a while. I'm gonna eat a banana first,” Gu Fei's Twin Incineration cleaved a path out for him in exchange for the two players' lives. Charging out of the crowd, Gu Fei fished out a banana from his dimensional pocket to eat it. Unlike Svelte Dancer's dagger attacks, his attack required a high mana

consumption. Saying that the Mage Gu Fei's mana pool was currently depleted was already being kind. In all honesty, it was completely empty right now.

"D*mn you! You scoundrel!" Svelte Dancer wanted to cry, but no tears would come out. How would she know that Gu Fei had asked that question to leave her to the lions and run off on his own! One person against an encirclement of over ten men; even Svelte Dancer's heart wavered as she shrieked, "When will you be back?!"

Gu Fei was peeling his banana as he ran, answering her with, "As soon as I can! Hold on!"

In the end, the Unbeatable under the Heavens' men learned that Gu Fei was out of mana. Not letting go of this chance, many hastily chased after Gu Fei and eased the pressure off Svelte Dancer considerably.

Gu Fei faced backward. When he saw the situation behind him, he immediately realized that the opposing men had split themselves into two groups. Svelte Dancer no longer had to push herself that far as he quickly gobbled up the banana. Although his mana had yet to replenish to a point that he was contented with, he could still handle these few enemies tailing him without being excessive.

He put Moonlit Nightfalls back into his dimensional pocket and took out his Sacred Flames of Baptism instead. Now, he no longer had to be so cautious with his opponents like before.

Chapter 144 - End of the First Round of Battle

One, two, three, four, five, six... Gu Fei did a head count of the players chasing after him. There were six players behind him, yet eleven players stayed with Svelte Dancer. This made Gu Fei feel displeased. Do these people deem me as below par compared to her?

This thinking should not be blamed on their opponents, though. Who would actually regard a Mage with depleted mana as a threat?

As such, the six men enthusiastically chased after Gu Fei without a shred of fear. Just as they were five meters away from Gu Fei, someone among the six fell onto the ground with a loud thud.

The other five men stopped on their tracks in astonishment. When did someone initiate an attack on them? None of them even sensed it coming toward them! All of them looked at Gu Fei who had not moved even a bit from his spot with widened eyes. They then looked down on their comrade who had fallen to the ground on his back with his four limbs sprawled. The person seemed to have received quite the shock as he repeatedly shouted, “Am I dead?! Am I already dead?!”

The five men were not amused and were mildly annoyed by his antics, especially when they spotted the banana peel on his sole.

“How can you be so careless?!” Gu Fei admonished.

The five ignored the man on the ground and headed toward Gu Fei with a roar. Witnessing the might of Gu Fei’s Spell Damage, they knew that now was a once in a lifetime opportunity to take him down with his empty mana.

“Make haste!” The five rushed toward Gu Fei. Two meters away from Gu Fei, a Warrior among the five activated Charge with a bellow.

Gu Fei sidestepped and sent a slash to the nape of the Warrior who had gone past him with Sacred Flames of Baptism.

The Warrior, whose Charge did not connect with anything, looked backward when he felt a breeze coming from behind him and saw in time Gu Fei's Chinese broadsword heading closer to his neck. This almost frightened him to death, especially since his Charge had yet to end. Continuing to stomp the final two meters, the Warrior thought to himself, It's over. By the time I stop charging forward, my head will have fallen off my body.

Unexpectedly, the Warrior's head was still intact when he finally halted his steps. Checking his HP, he saw that it had barely dropped. Now that he thought of it, what sort of damage could a mere Mage inflict?

The Warrior perked up when he finished thinking of that and promptly raised his claymore to launch an attack on Gu Fei once more. His four guildmates had also arrived at his location and joined his assault on Gu Fei by wielding the weapons in their hands. Behind them, the player who had become a victim of the discarded banana peel finally recovered from his shock and managed to get up and join the fight.

However, Gu Fei did not view these melee opponents as a threat and merely sent cuts sailing through the air with his Chinese broadsword toward them. A cleave, thrust, slash, twist, cut... Every stroke and every move he made always hit his targets.

The men grew astonished the more they fought with Gu Fei. The nimbleness that Gu Fei was displaying seemed unbelievable to their eyes. While none of their attacks or skills could hit Gu Fei no matter which angle they struck him, Gu Fei's counterattacks could not be dodged by them. Although the damage dealt by each strike was low, it was only a matter of time before their HP were reduced to zero. Furthermore, his Chinese broadsword's occasional fiery glow signaled the proccing of an additional fire attack that seared them quite painfully.

They truly regretted not bringing a Priest with them to chase after Gu Fei, as the Mage with empty mana whom they had initially thought could be killed off easily turned out to be —“AHH!” A scream echoed when one of them died from the Chinese broadsword’s fiery glow.

The five men were even more flustered now. Seeing the cuts and bruises that they had sustained from this fight, the possibility of them dying from simply being burned by the Mage without a Priest’s support was large.

“Priest! Let’s get us a Priest!” With this realization, the five immediately turned around and fled. They no longer tried to stop Gu Fei from recovering his mana, as it was more important for them to keep their lives.

However, they received an even greater shock when they turned around. It turned out that their guildmates who had not chased after Gu Fei were in more dire straits than them.

Svelte Dancer’s fighting style of using Fleetfoot was more extraordinary than Gu Fei’s. Her form flitting through the crowd and reaping the lives of the men very much resembled a combine harvester. The six men could at least activate their skills once or twice when facing Gu Fei. As for the players that had remained behind, they could not even keep up with Svelte Dancer’s speed and would even accidentally unleash their skills upon their guildmates oftentimes. At present, five out of the eleven players facing Svelte Dancer had been subdued by her.

With Svelte Dancer in the front and Gu Fei at the rear, these five men were now at a loss on where they should go. Upon realizing that the two were unparalleled experts, they all lost their hopes of winning this match.

In the current eleven-versus-two scenario, Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer actually won with an overwhelming advantage. The eleven men completely lost their will to fight and only made despondent

attempts at resisting. Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer increased their PvP tempo and very quickly took down the remaining ten players. When only a Warrior was left, he tremblingly backed away with his claymore placed in front.

Getting killed in the PvP tournament was not scary since it had no penalty whatsoever. Nonetheless, the Warrior felt frightened by his opponents' overwhelming strength. The two's act of demolishing their guild of forty-five men was precisely what left the Warrior quaking in his boots.

"Just who are you two?" the Warrior asked, bewildered.

Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer looked at each other, "What should we say?"

"I shan't bother you two anymore. I'll just do it myself!" The Warrior raised his claymore horizontally to take his life.

"Don't!" Svelte Dancer hurriedly shouted.

Gu Fei and the Warrior perplexedly looked at Svelte Dancer, only to see her drifting behind the Warrior and thrusting her dagger into him to take his life.

"You're a kill point!" Svelte Dancer mumbled as she watched the Warrior turn into a stream of white light.

With the end of the PvP match, the system quickly displayed its result. Since Amethyst Rebirth had no casualties and Unbeatable under the Heavens lost all its members, Amethyst Rebirth received a perfect score in this PvP match. On the members' contribution screen, Gu Fei who had taken down thirty-two players was awarded 32 kill points, Svelte Dancer who had killed off thirteen men was correspondingly awarded 13 kill points, and the rest of the ladies who had not done anything during the PvP match received 0 kill point. Because Gu Fei had the highest contribution, he was selected as this match's MVP and was awarded another 10 kill points.

“What is this ‘kill point’ for?” Gu Fei asked Svelte Dancer. He did not know if his previous mercenary PvP match’s few participants resulted into the scoring being conducted fast, but he failed to notice this system prompt at the time.

Svelte Dancer replied, “I don’t know as well. But since there’s such a statistic, I believe that it is related to the PvP tournament’s final rewards!”

As they were conversing with each other, the two got enveloped by white lights and were transported back to the plaza outside the Main Hall of Guilds.

The other forty-eight ladies were now beside Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer. Their faces all showed varying degrees of confusion.

“Did you two kill all of our forty-five opponents?” The ladies stared at the two from within the surrounding crowd. Although none of them saw the whole battle, the system’s scoring showed that all forty-five members of the opposing guild had fallen by Gu Fei’s and Svelte Dancer’s hands.

“How depressing!” Svelte Dancer moaned, saying, “He took all the kill points.” She flashed Gu Fei a spiteful expression.

Gu Fei shrugged his shoulders. Twenty of his kill points came from his Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno. Gu Fei had no choice but to unleash the spell upon seeing the large group that he and Svelte Dancer were up against. If he could, he would not use an AOE spell at all! After all, he somewhat felt discomfited from gaining 20 kill points by casting a spell only once, as it was equivalent to losing his chance to PvP against twenty opponents with that one stroke. Thinking of that, Gu Fei felt even more dejected.

Amid the laughter and cheers, someone suggested celebrating this victory.

The only entertainment available in-game was visiting a tavern,

but none of the taverns would have such poor business that it could take in fifty guests in one go. The Amethyst Rebirth's ladies went to many establishments, yet they failed to find one that could accommodate all fifty of them. All they got was a lot of attention along the way.

Indeed, seeing so many ladies walking down the streets together was very eye-catching. It was made even more eye-catching by the fact that only one man was among these ladies.

Realizing this fact, Gu Fei began to walk with lowered head to the point of appearing stoop as he did his best to hide within the crowd of women. When their group passed by a log-off point, he hurriedly shouted, "A UFO!"

Such low level trickery would obviously fool no one, yet the reticent Gu Fei's sudden exclamation startled the ladies. Without saying another word to the ladies, Gu Fei sprinted toward the safe zone and logged off.

This was how the first day of the event ended. Overall, people did not notice any unexpected outcomes. The first-rate guilds and mercenary groups, such as Traversing Four Seas and The Black Hand, that many considered as the most likely to win the tournaments easily got past the first round.

As for the inconspicuous mid-tier guilds and mercenary groups, not one cared about anything unusual happening to them. This was exactly what had happened between the low-tier guilds, such as Amethyst Rebirth and Unbeatable under the Heavens. The words of Unbeatable under the Heavens Guild held little wait, so no one bothered taking note of their accounts. Since this guild with forty-five members was eradicated by the opposing guild's two members, everyone thought of this guild as weak and unimportant. After all, only an idiot would boast about losing in a match.

From the perspective of the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies, they

would naturally avoid promoting Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer's PvP feat since the two were mum about it.

On the second day of the event, the officials announced the match-ups for the second round. This made it convenient for the various guilds and mercenary groups to research about their opponents and to formulate battle tactics accordingly.

However, everyone was extremely disappointed that the largest guild Traversing Four Seas and the second largest guild Carouse would not meet in this second round. Everyone was looking forward to this match-up, as it would be as good as defeating a strong opponent no matter who won or lost between the two guilds.

Sadly, fate did not work the way people wished it, and these large guilds ended up drawing some seemingly weak small guilds, instead. Quite a few players began to condemn the officials for fixing the drawing process and deliberately avoiding matching up the stronger guilds with one another.

Such sort of talks was definitely far too extreme. With only so few top guilds and so many small guilds in Yunduan City, the chances of a large guild meeting another large guild so early in the rounds were simply too minute. If the small guilds chosen to go against these big guilds were thick-skinned enough, they might have reasons to suspect that the officials were trying to undermine them by forcing them to meet strong foes in the early stages in order to prevent their existence from bringing trouble to the game company.

The real experts would never waste time finding excuses over this quandary and would instead face the problem head on.

“Level 4 Cloud Herder mercenary group with seventy-three members. This mercenary group is ranked sixth in Yunduan City. Its leader is Foe-herder amid the Clouds; number seven on the Warrior experience leaderboard. We struck the lottery, boys!”

Brother Assist enthusiastically said as he announced their enemy group for the second round in the PvP tournament to the other five members of Young Master's Elite mercenary group.

Chapter 145 - A Battle Not Fit for Someone without a Sense of Direction

“Seventy-three men!” everyone present echoed the number.

“Plus, the levels of these seventy-three players are not low. Twenty-seven of them are at level 40, thirty-nine at level 39, and seven at level 38. Since Young Master and I don’t really have any fighting power individually, this means that you will have to face eighteen players each,” Brother Assist continued to say.

Everyone was speechless. Even Gu Fei did not dare say that he could take on eighteen players by himself. After his experience with yesterday’s PvP, he now fully understood that this sort of goal-orientated tournament posed more problems for him than his casual PvP with unsuspecting ‘Bounty Mission’ targets. In this PvP tournament, even simply showing half of his head would invite the bombardment of the Archers’ arrows and Mages’ spells.

Evidently, Young Master’s Elite mercenary group with its six members would have no chance of winning if it faced this current opposing mercenary group head on.

“We must formulate an effective battle strategy to win this match,” Brother Assist said as he turned to face Young Master Han

Young Master Han nodded his head, “This is why I said that winning a match depends entirely on me.”

Everyone was speechless once more, albeit for a different reason.

“Alright. Let’s go!” Young Master Han majestically declared as he stood up, displaying the aura of being a leader. He theatrically said, “A mere Crowd Herder mercenary group will not stall the pace of my progress!”

“It’s Cloud Herder...” Brother Assist reminded him.

“That group is bound to fall by my hands, so its name is not

worth remembering.” Young Master Han showed the other five men how the Cloud Herder mercenary group was beneath his notice by leisurely walking out of the room.

“Young Master sure is amazing!” Royal God Call sighed, saying, “I’m always confident with my ability to deal with strong opponents, yet even my confidence miraculously disappears with him around.”

“It’s like you lose all sense of security,” Gu Fei agreed.

Brother Assist and War Without Wounds did not make a sound. As for Sword Demon, the closest battle buddy of Young Master Han, he merely smiled faintly as he stood up and left the room next. The remaining four men stood up at the same time and exited the tavern one after another.

With the second round participants of the mercenary PvP tournament being substantially less than the first round participants and the teleportation array being opened three hours earlier, all the matches for the second round were able to start at exactly 7 P.M. It was unlike yesterday’s situation where a match would only begin once both parties’ preparations were done. Presently, the system automatically regarded players who did not make it to the ‘changing room’ at 7 P.M. as non-participants.

Because of this rule, quite a number of players entered the teleportation array earlier, allowing many to conclude their preparations and strategy meetings inside the ‘changing room’ for their respective PvP matches ahead of time. Hardly any players were left by the time Young Masters’ Elite mercenary group arrived in the square outside the Hall of Mercenaries, so its members were able to teleport themselves right away into the ‘changing room’.

“There’s still half an hour left,” Young Master Han said as he looked at the time. He then promptly sat down on the ground and reached into his dimensional pocket for a bottle of liquor.

“Anyone?” Young Master Han offered the bottle to the other five members.

“Go get drunk by yourself!” everyone collectively replied.

“No need to be courteous! I still have some on me.” Young Master Han brought out another bottle and showed it to them.

The five adamantly shook their heads and no longer bothered with Young Master Han who had opened a bottle for the others before proceeding to drink one by himself.

Brother Assist would call out the number of players of the opposing group whenever it got updated. “Fifty-five men... Another one, so it’s fifty-six... And it’s now fifty-seven...” This went on and on until Cloud Herder mercenary group’s counter remained unchanged for five minutes at sixty-eight men with just three minutes remaining before the start time of the PvP match at 7 P.M.

“There are sixty-eight of them. Looks like that is all from Cloud Herder,” Brother Assist finally concluded.

“That is still quite a lot,” Young Master Han stood up and carefully poured the remaining content of the bottle of liquor to the ground before tossing it over, “Prepare to move out. Leave your mercenary channel open.”

In flashes of white light, the six men were teleported straight into the PvP arena.

Young Master Han swept his gaze over the map’s terrain first before instructing his fellow mercenaries, “Sword Demon, Miles, Assist, and Wounds, head toward the four sides of this map’s boundary. Get to each corner and report your coordinates to me. Brother Assist and Wounds, head to the ones near; Miles and Sword Demon, go to the ones far.”

The four headed to the indicated locations without a complaint. Questioning the orders of the commander on the battlefield was a

big no-no, unless one thought of himself or herself as a [Power Xtreme Centurion](#) that could reverse the course of events with his or her hands. Although this was but a game, one person's recklessness could still negatively affect the outcome of a PvP.

"Royal, you might be our most unstable factor in this PvP match," Young Master Han honestly told Royal God Call.

"Why?" Royal God Call asked, surprised.

"If I tell you a set of coordinates, can you find its corresponding location?" Young Master Han asked.

Royal God Call blushed redder than a baboon's ass. His poor sense of direction was as outstanding as his prestige as the number one Mage in various MMOs.

"Stay with me for now!" Young Master Han brought Royal God Call with him to the middle of a forest by a small hill. At this same moment, Sword Demon and the rest reported their coordinates on the mercenary channel accordingly.

"Coordinates: 500, 500," Gu Fei stated.

"Coordinates: 0, 500," Sword Demon reported next.

"Coordinates: 0, 0" was said by War Without Wounds.

"Coordinates: 500, 0," Brother Assist shared lastly.

"Oh. This map has almost the same measurements as that map I've measured before!" Young Master Han said, adding, "Nobody has gotten discovered, right? Wait a while and I'll be able to monitor your locations shortly."

Young Master Han and Royal God Call had reached the peak of the small hill by the time he finished talking. Young Master Han lifted his head and looked about as he muttered, "This hill is not as high as that hill over there, but the treetops over there should be about the same height!" He then walked about before finally stopping beside a tall tree. Looking up, he observed it left and right

and said to Royal God Call while patting the tree, “Come. Give me a lift.”

“Huh?” Royal God Call asked, not understanding what Young Master Han wanted him to do.

Young Master Han pointed up the tree, “Up there.”

“You want to climb up the tree?” Royal God Call bewilderedly gave Young Master Han a boost to climb the tree. With his effeminate face, the alcoholic Young Master Han was still adept at doing things. Through Royal God Call’s assistance, Young Master Han adroitly clambered up the branches of the tree.

“What are you trying to do?” Royal God Call shouted from the base of the tree.

“Don’t shout. Remember to communicate through the mercenary channel if we are far from each other,” Young Master Han managed to send a message as he climbed further up the tree.

“What are you two doing?” Upon seeing his message to Royal God Call, the other four inquired on the mercenary channel.

“Oh. The viewing range from up here isn’t too bad!” Young Master Han exclaimed on the mercenary channel.

“What?” The five were left clueless with that response of his.

“Wounds, the enemy is heading to your location; 500, 0. Miles, you’re currently positioned far behind the enemy. Can you see them?”

“Nope,” Gu Fei replied.

“Head toward 428, 427. There is a mound in that location; do you see it?” Young Master Han asked.

“Yes... But how do you know its coordinates?” Gu Fei asked as he headed toward the indicated location.

“Talent,” Young Master Han answered simply, chuckling.

“Sword Demon, there’s a low ground over by 29, 476. Go there and refresh your coordinates when you can.”

“Got it,” Sword Demon acknowledged and moved toward the indicated location as well.

“...The players from Crowd Herder have gotten near our spawn point. Wounds, your coordinates,” Young Master Han informed after a while.

“59, 2. Also, it’s Cloud Herder!” War Without Wounds corrected.

“Do you see that wooden house over by 35, 64 yet?” Young Master Han asked.

“I see it. I’ll head over there now.”

“I’m not asking you to head there; the enemies are near that location. Is there anything around you that you can use to hide yourself? Keep yourself hidden first. I don’t really have a clear view of your location since some g*dd*mn trees are blocking my line of sight,” Young Master Han cursed.

“Mhm. There’s a large boulder here.”

“Hide behind that and report your coordinates.”

“54, 16,” War Without Wounds said after hiding behind the boulder.

Young Master Han adjusted his position upon the tree until he could find an angle where he could see the large boulder.

“Oh... It looks like you can’t hide there for long. Get ready to use Cyclone. Cut down as many opponents as you can!” The Cloud Herder mercenary group’s members just reached Young Master’s Elite mercenary group’s spawn point and did not discover a trace of the six men, so they began to split themselves into smaller teams to comb the area.

“Eight men are headed your direction, Wounds. Looks like you’ll be the first to sacrifice yourself for the team. We will remember

you,” Young Master Han stated apathetically.

“F*ck*r, you guys better not lose!” War Without Wounds tightened his grip on his claymore.

“Naturally. Get ready,” Young Master Han warned.

War Without Wounds’ claymore was angled off the ground. It was in a position to unleash Cyclone and brutally rend through his enemies once they showed their heads to him.

“F*ck! You’ve already been discovered. Hurry and rush out,” Young Master Han quickly shouted.

War Without Wounds also noticed the fiery glow that had appeared above him. The enemies evidently discovered that someone was hiding behind the boulder so, instead of coming over, they simply had their Mages directly bombard the area with spells. War Without Wounds bellowed as he rushed out. Although he managed to evade the Descending Wheel of Flames coming from above, the sight that had greeted him upon his emergence from behind the boulder left him completely discouraged.

The enemies had already taken precautions against an ambush coming from behind the boulder and maintained a fair distance from it. When War Without Wounds rushed out, he immediately received the concerted attacks of all sixty-eight men from the Cloud Herder mercenary group. Arrows, spells... Long-range attacks rained upon him. No matter how high a Warrior’s defense and HP was, surviving this barrage of attacks that held nothing back was simply impossible.

War Without Wounds had neither Gu Fei’s nor Svelte Dancer’s fast reaction and movement speed. Although his claymore managed to cleave a few balls of fire heading his way, he could not disperse all of them, especially that soon-to-land Descending Wheel of Flames. Under the enfilade of arrows and flames, War Without Wounds transformed into a stream of white light.

In the list of Young Master's Elite mercenary group's participating members, War Without Wounds' name dimmed as the opposing mercenary group was awarded 1 kill point.

"Brother Assist, your location is a little conspicuous. Head over to a mound at 468, 101," The circumstances looked dire, so Young Master Han increased his commanding tempo.

"Miles, have you reached it? Stay where you are."

The Cloud Herder mercenary group finished splitting up the sixty-eight players into eight-man teams and headed around the map in eight directions. As for the remaining four players, they headed toward the highest points of the map.

"The opponents are about to obtain a high ground. Sword Demon, quickly head toward 128, 412 using your Fleetfoot; there's a forest in that location!"

"Brother Assist, there are two teams heading your way, so move toward 399, 412. Make haste; there's another team coming toward you from 178, 134. Get to that low ground before they arrive in order to get away undetected."

"Miles, there's a team of eight heading toward your direction."

"Great! I'll take care of them!" Gu Fei was raring to go.

"No, don't do that. Another team is nearby in the 12 o'clock direction. If you engage those eight men, you'll end up taking all sixteen of them!" Young Master Han cautioned, adding, "From behind that mound, head toward 426, 375. I shan't have to worry about you with your speed, yeah?"

"Of course..." Gu Fei actually wanted to try facing off against sixteen men all at once. But since this was a group activity, he was first and foremost a member of a group.

"Mmm, Royal..." Royal God Call, who had been ignored all this while, was finally addressed by Young Master Han.

“What?” Royal God Call was already bored to death at this point. It was as if he had nothing to do with this battle at the moment. Running in accordance to coordinates was a simple task to the average players, yet this was literally the world’s most difficult matter for someone like him who was geospatially challenged.

“The enemy team in the 3 o’clock direction has already entered the forest,” Young Master Han said to him.

Royal God Call lifted his head and took a look. Young Master Han was hidden amid the verdant trees, obscured by leaves and branches. The location up a tree was truly a wondrous concealment spot. Regrettably, the trees around here were thick and high, so Royal God Call found it impossible to climb up one without anyone giving him a lift from below.

“What should I do?” Royal God Call asked. The surrounding forest was the most suitable terrain for the Archer to survive, a job class that excelled in ambushing others. However, Royal God Call’s poor sense of direction limited his ability to display the job class advantage here. Just how was it possible for someone without a great sense of direction to use the terrain effectively to deal with the enemy? If Royal God Call were to attempt this, let alone not knowing where the enemies were, it would even be possible for him to lose himself while making his way around the forest.

“Stand here. Turn right. Mmm, that’s good. Run straight in that direction!” Young Master Han said.

“Okay!” Royal God Call finally received Young Master Han’s instruction. Securing his bow on his back, he ran in the direction Young Master Han had just indicated.

Currently, the players of both teams were frantically making their moves all about this PvP arena.

Power Xtreme Centurion - A DC inspired TV show from the late 1980s. Think of Power Rangers, but each with individual mech suit and unique weapon or power.

Chapter 146 - Raiding the Hilltop

Young Master Han, who was currently standing atop the tall tree, felt quite pleased with himself as he watched everyone run like busy little ants all over this PvP arena. The eight teams of Cloud Herder mercenary group each went to the four corners and edges of this square-shaped map. One of the enemy teams reached Young Master's Elite mercenary group's location at the 0, 0 coordinates and stayed there without venturing further.

"Guys, update your coordinates to me," Young Master Han reminded everyone on the mercenary channel. Although he could see far from his vantage point, some parts, such as places behind hills, certain spots within the forests, and areas with uneven landscapes, still remained obscured from Young Master Han's field of view. All of his fellow mercenaries were currently hiding in such places as per his instructions, which resulted into him being unable to determine their exact locations.

After the four reported their current coordinates, Young Master Han's mouth twitched, "Royal, I gotta give credit where credit is due. May I ask, are you still running in a straight line?"

"Of course," Royal God Call replied.

"If you continue running, I guarantee that you won't be able to get out of this forest," Young Master Han sighed.

"Royal, can you actually be this bad? Exactly how did you do your 'Bounty Mission' all this while? Didn't those missions involve finding coordinates as well?" Gu Fei asked.

"Royal's booklet of coordinates can't be used here..." Brother Assist reminded him.

"Oh..." Gu Fei finally made sense of everything. Royal God Call had a booklet containing a large amount of Yunduan City's coordinates. Whenever he needed to head toward certain

coordinates, he would check his booklet first; even if he failed to find the exact coordinates in it, he could at least flip to the page with the nearest set of coordinates that had landmarks jotted down beside it. An example landmark was Ray's Bar. Only by relying on these familiar locations could Royal God Call go to the corresponding coordinates.

“Maintain a clear channel! Don't chat here!” Young Master Han chastised the two as he issued the next batch of orders. “Sword Demon, wait for my signal to exit the forest and run to 0, 400! Miles, once Sword Demon departs, leave that back of the hill you're on and head toward the woodland at 366, 365 at your fastest speed. Brother Assist, from the lowland area you're in, there is a series of small knolls up ahead at 426, 375, right? Go there now.”

Over by the Cloud Herder mercenary group's side, group leader Foe-herder was also issuing commands while searching the nearby areas for their enemies with a small team. “The people over by a vantage point, have you discovered anything or anyone yet?”

“No.”

“How about the other teams?”

“We have arrived at the 7 'clock position; nothing found.”

“We are now at the 6 'clock position; nothing found.”

The eight teams of Cloud Herder mercenary group, besides the furthest team that that had run in the 1 o'clock direction, managed to reach their designated positions and reported their status back to Foe-herder.

“Everyone, get ready. Once the last team is at the 1 o'clock position, we will begin sweeping the map in a clockwise direction,” Foe-herder sent this message.

Unexpectedly, after sending out this command, a message arrived from one of the four scouts situated by a vantage point, “A target located! A target located!”

“Position!”

“Target came from the forest at 11 o’clock. He’s currently heading toward the 10 o’clock direction,” the scout reported. Any average player could divide the map into various segments of a clock and estimate the direction of movement, but to tell the exact coordinates of each place just from sight alone required talent, just as Young Master Han had previously said.

“Keep your eyes on him and update me of his movements! Team 2 and Team 3, which are nearest to the target, get over there for the kill!” Foe-herder commanded.

The four scouts kept track of Sword Demon once he revealed himself.

Certain blind spots still existed even when they were on a high ground like this, so it was still possible to lose sight of a player if he or she dove into a land depression or hid behind a mound. Due to this fact, the four did not notice it when a lone figure sprinted from behind a hill on the other side of the map and instantly disappeared into a nearby patch of shrubberies.

“Sword Demon, that’s enough. Stop where you are.” Despite all these players looking no more than ants from Young Master Han’s vantage point, he could still distinguish friends from foes: solitary figures were friends, whereas groups were enemies.

“He stopped!” the scout reported.

“Position?” asked someone in one of the two teams that were preparing to intercept Sword Demon.

“Uhm...” The scouts were briefly at a loss on how they should relay Sword Demon’s position. If Sword Demon was in motion, they could say the clock direction he was heading to. Since Sword Demon was standing still, the scouts found it hard to describe his location.

“Position?” the team member repeated his question.

“Uhm... Take a turning to the left from where you guys are at. Further ahead, you’ll catch sight of him. The other team needs to head slightly to the right.”

“Ah, no! Veer a little more to the left! You guys have gone too far to the right!”

“The team on the left, you gotta go to the left some more.”

“That team on the left still needs to move a little bit to the left. No! You’ve gone too far to the left now; move to the right once more!”

“A bit more to the right....”

“Just a bit more to the right....”

“That’s too much. A little to the left. Sigh... Your team is on the left too much. Head right—”

The two teams that were receiving these instructions real-time finally had a breakdown at this point and yelled in unison, “Private message!”

“Oh...” The scouts finally realized what was causing the confusion: The four of them were all giving directions to the teams at the same time. Realizing this problem, the four scouts assigned one person to direct each team accordingly. Since Sword Demon had not moved all this while, their attention remained focused on him. When one of the scouts slightly blinked and looked at another direction, he spotted a figure speeding toward them. “ARGH! I’ve spotted another enemy!” the scout yelled.

“Where?!” Foe-herder quickly asked.

“He’s heading straight to us!” the other scouts yelled as well.

“Why are you all flustered, then? There are four of you! Aren’t you guys prepared for an ambush?!” Foe-herder rebuked his underlings’ lack of composure.

“But he’s so fast!” The four scouts exclaimed as they hurriedly

prepared themselves to engage the approaching person in combat.

“Fast? How fast can he be?! Can he be faster than your arrows? Let’s see how fast he can still be once his Fleetfoot is no longer in effect!” Foe-herder said arrogantly. He had arranged for four Archers to be their group’s scouts precisely because they had the ability to attack targets from afar once they spotted one.

The four Archers nocked arrows on Snipe and waited for Gu Fei to enter their attack range to release them. As the target drew closer, his equipment became more discernable to the four and they all gasped in shock, “He – He’s not a Thief on Fleetfoot!”

“Then, what is he?”

“He looks like... a Mage...” Gu Fei’s Midnight Spirit Robe fluttered as he moved speedily toward these men, betraying his job class almost instantly. Only two job classes would wear robes: Mage and Priest. Since Priest was a non-combat job class, it was impossible for one to rush toward them with tremendous killing intent.

“So why the hell are you four scared of him?! You’re all Archers!” Foe-herder cursed these particular underlings’ incompetence once more. Not seeing it with his own eyes, he of course could never understand that there was a Mage capable of having such monstrously fast movement speed.

The four scouts’ heads were currently filled with questions, so they did not even bother looking at the messages on their mercenary channel. Seeing Gu Fei enter their attack range, one of the four Archers shouted a command and they all simultaneously released their bowstrings. Four arrows streaked through the air like shooting stars.

Gu Fei was brimming with confidence at this point. If his speed was still at level 30, he would obviously not be capable of dodging the four arrows on Snipe that were currently flying toward him. After all, his in-game body did not possess the required movement

speed and nimbleness to actively dodge the arrows back then despite him having the ability to see the arrows' trajectory. Right now, he was already at level 39. Although the Archers' execution speed of skills had increased as well, it was still inferior to the increase Gu Fei had had with his nine levels bonus stats all pumped into Agility, as well as his Windchaser's Boots' movement speed buffs. Thus, Gu Fei did not even consider these average players' arrows on Snipe as a threat.

The four scouts on the hilltop thought that the Mage Gu Fei would be easily taken down by their concerted attacks; instead, they saw him effortlessly dodge their four arrows and instantly close in on them.

“WHAT?! HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?!” the four men exclaimed as their jaws dropped.

“Homing Projectile! Let's quickly use Homing Projectile!” Someone among the four Archers cried out and they scrambled to nock their arrows. Their current strongest skill, Snipe, was still on cool-down time, so they could not fire off arrows on it at the moment.

The need for Archers to be deft at using their bows was a distinct drawback that reared its ugly head right now. If even Gu Fei, the supposed expert in hidden weapons, had to maintain his calmness, these Archers would of course also need to do so. One of the four Archers, who lacked mental fortitude, could not maintain his calmness in the face of Gu Fei's assault and subsequently failed to nock his arrow no matter how hard he tried. Fortunately, the other three Archers possessed sufficient mental fortitude so they were able to initiate their attacks like normal. The twang of the bowstrings resounded as three glowing arrows flew toward Gu Fei.

Since Gu Fei did not even see Snipe's speed as a threat, why would he be bothered by Homing Projectile? The skill's homing ability meant that a target could not dodge it, yet Gu Fei did not even intend to dodge the arrows on Homing Projectile heading his

way in the first place. Parrying with his Moonlit Nightfalls, he successfully knocked each of the three arrows off before they could deal any damage on him.

The four scouts were so flabbergasted that their jaws were about to fall off. While they were still in a daze, Gu Fei already arrived before them.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Gu Fei slashed with his blade. The Archer job class also had inherently low HP. Barely managing to take on Gu Fei’s one massive blow, two Archers were insta-killed while the remaining two were at a loss on how to deal with Gu Fei.

Gu Fei cared not for the two’s confusion and merely sent a few slashes their way. Since they did not have the abilities to evade Gu Fei’s strikes and to take him head on, the two Archers decided to flee from their fight with him instead. Gu Fei was way faster than them, however. In just a few steps, he managed to close in on the two once more and dispose of them.

None of the four scouts could make sense of anything even in their deaths: “Is he really a Mage?! I seem to have heard him cast Twin Incineration, but could that mage spell really insta-kill people? Was I dreaming?”

After getting teleported out of the PvP arena upon their deaths, the four men bewilderedly stood in the plaza. The two teams designated to hunt for Sword Demon were still sending them messages: “Position! Position!”

“Position, your *ss! We are already dead!” the four replied irately.

Foe-herder was extremely nonplussed upon receiving this message from the four scouts. Just how much time had passed since they first reported seeing the target till they got killed? He finally realized that his four scouts were not exaggerating when they said that the target was “so fast”.

“Team 4 and Team 5, head toward the vantage point.”

“Team 2 and team 3, have you lot located that target yet?”

“Not yet!”

Young Master Han, who was still atop the tree, saw clearly how Gu Fei had stormed that hilltop and caused a series of white lights to flash afterward. Receiving Gu Fei’s “done” message immediately after, he happily said, “Very good, Miles. Head back to your previous hiding place. Sword Demon, dart toward 223, 398. Brother Assist, update me of your new coordinates. Royal, are you out of the woods yet?” Troublingly, Young Master Han did not receive a response for that last message.

Chapter 147 - Incomprehensible

“This is it! The crucial moment!” Young Master Han muttered to himself as he adjusted his position atop the tall tree to clearly monitor the Cloud Herder mercenary group’s movements. “Miles, head toward 118, 425. Sword Demon, turn toward 211, 301. Brother Assist, move toward 489, 101. Royal, hit me up when you finally exit the forest.”

Once more, no response came for that last statement.

Gu Fei, Sword Demon, and Brother Assist were running all over the map, while Royal God Call was busying himself with getting lost inside the forest.

Over by the Cloud Herder mercenary group’s side, the group leader Foe-herder personally climbed up the hilltop that his men had once held the vantage point in his desire to see just how fast the Mage was.

Gu Fei’s fast speed was indeed very eye-catching with all the players running about like ants in this map. Foe-Herder was quite flabbergasted when he saw this. After all, Gu Fei’s abnormally fast speed would only make sense if he were a Thief or an Archer who could attain such speed by wearing a pair of top-grade boots and adding a lot of points toward Agility. As for a Mage... How many points to Agility would it take to achieve such fast speed? A Mage with great Agility but low Intelligence would be useless by then, so how did he kill off four Archers in one go?

Foe-herder quickly contacted the four scouts Gu Fei had eliminated moments ago. “How did you guys die?”

“He cut us down with a sword.”

“I doubt that! That guy’s a Mage, so why would he cut you all with a sword?” Foe-herder emphasized the word ‘cut’ as he asked this question.

“We don’t know either!” the four had a really aggrieved expression on their faces right now, yet their group leader could naturally not see that through the mercenary channel.

“Did you lot use Appraisal on him?” Foe-herder pressed on.

“No...” None of them managed to appraise Gu Fei, considering that they had barely fired off two rounds of arrows before Gu Fei was already upon them.

Could he be a wolf in sheep’s clothing, purposely wearing a robe to make others mistake him for a Mage? As Foe-herder was thinking of this, the four sent this message: “But we did hear him chant ‘Twin Incineration’ when he attacked us.”

“A spell incantation doesn’t necessarily have to be uttered by a Mage,” Foe-herder said exasperatedly.

“But there was a fiery glow!” The two men who had gotten burned by Gu Fei’s spell insisted.

“There is this sort of thing called additional magic attack!” Foe-herder ended the conversation with that statement, convinced that he had wholly figured out the conundrum. That guy is truly crafty; he must be a Thief, Foe-herder thought to himself as he watched Gu Fei sprint away.

Standing high up on the hill, not only could Foe-herder see the general lay of the land, he had also become a highly prominent target. Gu Fei who was currently running on the PvP field had fond memories on that hilltop since it was the place that he had finished off the opposing scouts, and when he casually glance over there again, he spotted Foe-herder that was standing up there.

Gu Fei happily fired off a message on the mercenary channel, “There is someone up that hill again!”

“I saw already...” Young Master Han replied.

“How should I rush over there?” Gu Fei needed Young Master Han’s guidance for his assault route as he did not want to

accidentally run into three or four teams along the way.

“Don’t go there. From here onward, your only job is to run. No need to tangle with the enemies anymore,” Young Master Han instructed.

“WHAT?!” Besides Gu Fei, Royal God Call and Brother Assist also exclaimed this when they heard Young Master Han’s words.

“Right now, we have 4 kill points while they have 1 kill point. No need for more kills since we are in the lead,” Young Master Han explained.

“But I have faith that I can eliminate them all with your instructions!” Gu Fei argued confidently. If it was just this single eight-man team, Gu Fei could definitely wipe it out. In this manner, finishing off Cloud Herder’s sixty plus members was doable with him alone.

“No need for that; just run!”

“Why?!” Gu Fei was not resigned to this decision. They evidently had the strength to initiate attacks, so why did they have to act so cowardly?

“That’s right! Why do we have to be sneaky when we can fight them?!” Royal God Call was discontented as well. He might have no sense of direction, but he still had his pride as an expert!

“Miles, change your direction to 234, 259; Royal God Call, a team has just entered the forest to search it. Note where you’re hiding,” Young Master Han actually ignored Royal God Call’s and Gu Fei’s objection.

“Awesome! I’ll take care of them!” Royal God Call declared. Although fighting in this sort of terrain for a geospatially challenged person like himself was hard, Royal God Call would rather struggle than be cowardly like Young Master Han.

“Brother Assist, move to 322, 145,” Since Royal God Call was blatantly snubbing his instruction, Young Master Han also

deliberately ignored his comment.

“Young Master, why are we dealing with them like this when – when we can kill them?” Brother Assist was not rash like Royal God Call and chose to follow the instruction as he voiced his inner qualms.

“Brother Assist, can you not be so childish like them?” Young Master Han asked instead.

“I just want to know the reason—”

“We don’t have time for that now. Sword Demon, turn to 128, 278. Activate Stealth if you meet anyone along the way. Thirty seconds should be enough for you to shake them off,” Young Master Han said.

Sword Demon uncomplainingly moved according to Young Master Han’s orders.

Over by the Cloud Herder’s mercenary channel, a pleasantly surprised cry sounded, “We’ve found a target in the forest here!”

“Deal with him. Team 1, head over to help,” Foe-herder ordered as he instructed the other teams to block off the running two men’s path of escape.

Sadly, he did not possess Young Master Han’s talent to tell the coordinates from sight alone despite him being ranked seventh on the Warrior experience leaderboard. When he gave directions, they were in the ‘clock direction’ or ‘relative direction’ format. Thus, his general instructions made it difficult for his groupmates to complete the encirclement in time, especially since Young Master Han, who had a clear view of everything, made the necessary adjustments at crucial moments.

Moreover, Gu Fei and the rest moved about based on their judgment and would only alter their routes at Young Master Han’s advice.

At this moment, the defiant Royal God Call had entered a tedious

combat with the two teams inside the forest.

Partaking in a fight inside a forest required him to change his position every shot he made. Royal God Call fully understood this logic and quickly moved away after firing off his first arrow and hearing his enemies shout, “Here! Over here!” However, he very quickly lost his bearings.

Incessant cries of “Here!” and “Over there!” echoed about as Royal God Call, who was hiding behind a tree, peeked his head out with one question in mind, F*ck! Just where the hell was I moments ago?

Steeling himself, he randomly chose a direction and ran out. He intended to locate another target and fire off his second arrow. Yet, he never expected to locate six targets at the same time, each of them shouting, “OVER HERE!” Although Royal God Call could still calmly shoot one more arrow at them, he noticed that his escape path had already been blocked by three of them.

In an instant, spells, arrows, and sneaky stabs came upon Royal God Call who furiously struggled to defend himself. With a Priest among the opposing team, his attacks were useless unless they insta-killed his targets. In the end, Royal God Call turned into a beam of white light without managing to take one enemy down.

“F*CK!” the irate Royal God Call bellowed on the mercenary channel. The score was now 4 against 2.

The only ones left in the PvP arena among Young Master’s Elite mercenary group were Gu Fei, Brother Assist, Sword Demon, and Young Master Han. Before the rest could express their sorrow for Royal God Call’s death, Brother Assist called out, “I bumped into some enemies.”

With his slow movement speed and lack of fighting prowess, Brother Assist easily succumbed to his death following an opponent’s exclamation of: “There’s another target over here!” Young Master’s Elite mercenary group consecutively lost two

members, bringing the score to 4 against 3.

Brother Assist was in a daze as he got teleported outside of the PvP arena. Royal God Call, who was beside him, was beating the wall in anguish. Coming back to his senses, Brother Assist sent out this message: “We can’t keep hiding like this!”

“I did it on purpose,” Young Master Han typed this confession.

“What?”

“You meeting the opposing team after getting out of that low ground is because I directed you over to them,” Young Master Han explained.

Gu Fei, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds made a din when they saw his admission.

“You sent me to my death... on purpose?” Brother Assist could not believe what he had just read.

“Just what are you trying to do?” Royal God Call asked in frustration. Actually, he was the most dissatisfied out of all of them as he failed to contribute anything to the PvP match due to his poor sense of direction. When he tried to engage the enemies, he was instead easily taken down by them. How was this outcome befitting an expert like him?

“Don’t be very dramatic. If you knew that I also directed you to the forest on purpose, you would be angry as well, right?” Young Master Han asked.

“THE HELL DID YOU SAY?!” Royal God Call indeed became angry.

“Just what is going on?” Gu Fei asked as he stopped running around the map.

“Just keep running like I told you,” Young Master Han said to Gu Fei.

Gu Fei mulishly chose to turn back, issuing an order to Young

Master Han instead, “I’ll get rid of that commanding guy on that hill. We can kill the rest after! Update me the coordinates of the opposing group’s eight teams!”

“Miles, this is why I idolize you! Go! Avenge me and kill them all!” Royal God Call hated that the mercenary channel could not display the resentment he was feeling right now.

Inside the PvP arena, Gu Fei pulled out Moonlit Nightfalls and sprinted back to the small hill before. With his superiorly fast speed that could allow him to escape danger, he was not afraid of encountering the eight teams at the same time.

Meanwhile, Foe-herder saw Gu Fei suddenly change direction and head toward his location atop this hill. “He is coming back here?” With a faint smile on Foe-herder’s face, he pulled out his claymore and planted it to the ground. He grandly posed as he regarded Gu Fei with insolence. As the seventh rank Warrior on the experience leaderboard, he did not fear dueling with anyone.

“Oh! There’s another one!” As Foe-herder was staring intently at Gu Fei, he saw another figure heading toward him from his peripheral vision. “There’s movement by the foot of the hill where I am at. Two players are heading my way fast. Kill them and we will win this PvP match in terms of kill points,” Foe-herder issued this order.

Chapter 148 - 6 against 4

Gu Fei was happily running toward the hilltop when he noticed that there was someone beside him who was heading in the same direction. Turning his head to look, he saw that it was Sword Demon. “Hey!” He pointed his sword to Sword Demon as a form of greeting and said, “Let’s go killin’!”

“Listen!” Sword Demon blocked Gu Fei’s advance.

“What?”

“We’ll likely head straight into an ambush if we rush to them like this,” Sword Demon replied.

“That’s perfect! Saves us the time to find them; we can kill all the enemies in one go,” Gu Fei was currently experiencing an adrenaline rush and carelessly thought that all sorts of PvP maneuvers were useless before his absolute strength.

“Calm down. I know your Attack Power is high, but can you really face over ten enemies at once?” Sword Demon rationalized.

“If you shield me for a bit...” Gu Fei began to say, thinking of his coordination with Svelte Dancer yesterday.

“I may be able to shield you once, but there won’t be a second time,” Sword Demon frankly said. Gesturing around them, he added, “Take a look.”

Plains surrounded them, so they could immediately see the many teams of Cloud Herder mercenary group heading their way from various directions. Furthermore, Foe-herder was now provocatively pointing his claymore toward Gu Fei and Sword Demon.

Even if they rushed up the hill and eliminated Foe-herder, they would end up getting surrounded by the other members afterward. Uncaringly, Gu Fei lifted his Moonlit Nightfalls and accepted Foe-herder’s taunt. “We’ll kill as many as we can!” With that, he

continued his charge up the hill.

Sword Demon tried to block Gu Fei once more, yet his speed was no match for the latter. Despite being a Thief, Sword Demon's boots were not top grade. He knew that he would not catch up to Gu Fei even if he activated his Fleetfoot, so he could only helplessly follow him from behind.

Foe-herder remained unfazed when he saw that the two men had continued their charge toward him. With the enemies just three meters away from him, Foe-herder parted his two hands holding a claymore each and placed them on both sides of his body.

“Dual-wielder! He already went for his Job Class Advancement as a Berserker! Be careful!” Sword Demon shouted after Gu Fei.

When a level 40 Warrior advanced to a Berserker, the first skill he or she would learn was Dual-wielding Mastery, which would allow him or her to dual-wield weapons. Nonetheless, equipping weapons on a dominant hand and a non-dominant hand had some differences. While no changes would occur to the weapon that was equipped on the dominant hand, equipping a weapon on the non-dominant hand would only allow a player to access 20% of the weapon's Attack Power. This percentage would only increase when the respective mastery for the skill reached a higher rank. This skill was similar to Gu Fei's Spell Mastery, so players did not need to grind its proficiency. As long as they reached the appropriate level, they could level up the skill's rank from the relevant NPC over by the Warrior Encampment.

Foe-herder was at level 40 and he had a non-dominant left hand. Therefore, the sword in his left hand could only unleash 20% of its Attack Power. However, the Dual-wielding Mastery skill affected not just this.

“Cyclone!” Although Foe-Herder's current posture of hanging his claymores by his two sides was different to a Warrior's regular stance when unleashing Cyclone, Gu Fei could still tell his

intention just from seeing half his body's posing.

What surprised Gu Fei was not the fact that a Warrior had activated this skill during a PvP; instead, it was the fact that Foe-herder had activated the skill early. Having fought with Warriors many times, Gu Fei no longer needed to take a defensive stance against it. Using his fast speed and high damage output advantages, he managed to insta-kill many opponents in the past just by guessing when they would start their attacks. At this moment, however, Foe-herder activated his Cyclone about three meters away – a distance Gu Fei had no means of attacking the other.

This small detail already decided the gap between an expert and an average player. Many Warriors could not use Cyclone against Gu Fei, yet Foe-herder's Cyclone was even starting to spin.

The change that Dual-wielding Mastery brought could directly be seen through this Cyclone alone. The speed of Cyclone produced by two claymores being held parallel to the ground was fiercer and gustier than the speed of regular Cyclone.

Players had long noticed this aspect of the skill and they had of course tried using both hands to unleash Cyclone before, but they ended up returning to using single weapons to perform the skill when they realized that their off-hand weapons did not generate any Attack Power. Putting this aside, there was also a possibility that a Warrior might unluckily push his or her opponent outside the Cyclone's attack range with their off-hand weapons. As a corollary, the attack from the dominant hand would get wasted.

At present, with the non-dominant hand finally able to generate Attack Power, this Cyclone was able to display the advantages of dual-wielding weapons.

Gu Fei's pupils contracted. He could tell at a glance that this doubly fast Cyclone was not something he could block! Nonetheless, Gu Fei still positioned his sword before him as he

knew that doing something was better than just waiting for his death.

...And what awaited him was extreme pain!

The sword met the claymores and, as Gu Fei had expected, failed to block Cyclone. Grating against his body, Foe-herder's Cyclone successfully flung Gu Fei outward with a whoosh.

Sword Demon chased after Gu Fei's flying figure and cushioned the latter's fall by positioning himself behind Gu Fei. "I'm alive!" Gu Fei gasped in astonishment as he stood up.

"His left hand holding a claymore only dealt 20% damage," Sword Demon told Gu Fei. Having known Gu Fei for quite some time, his fellow mercenaries wholly understood that Gu Fei did not spend much time researching about the game's mechanics like them.

Gu Fei sighed in relief. Although he was not that knowledgeable of the game's mechanics, he at least had an understanding of this sort of concepts after playing Parallel World for over a month. It would indeed be an overkill if just 20% of a Warrior's Attack Power could insta-kill someone.

However, the two did not have the time to ponder about this matter for long since a fiery glow began to emerge right above their heads, the ground beneath their feet became warmer, and the piercing sound of objects traveling through air echoed about.

"Quickly dodge!" The duo simultaneously shouted as they bolted away.

Descending Wheel of Flames, Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno, Double Shot, Homing Projectile... The opposing teams that had gotten into firing range of Gu Fei and Sword Demon began unleashing their long-range attacks on the two.

Although the two managed to dodge the first wave, the second wave was already upon them. The next batch of flame wheels

appeared above them; the Olympic rings of Descending Wheel of Flames that Gu Fei had previously disdained effectively widened the spell's current AOE.

Relying purely on his extremely fast movement speed, Gu Fei barely dodged the flame wheels. Sword Demon was not as lucky, though, and one flame wheel managed to hit him full force. Thankfully, the average Mages did not have Gu Fei's or Drifting's high Spell Damage, so that one flame wheel failed to insta-kill Sword Demon. He was still ablaze when he ran after Gu Fei.

"We can't continue like this; let's split up. Rush out of the encirclement from the 156, 217 direction," Sword Demon said as he activated Fleetfoot and headed toward a different direction.

As another flame wheel began to form above Gu Fei's head, he quickly ran for his life. He used Descending Wheel of Flames to insta-kill many players before, yet he was currently being forced to flee by this very same spell. Was this what others meant by retribution?

Gu Fei ran onward as he took note of the flame wheel's progress above his head. After a bit, he could only sigh, "I'm finished!"

Two flames wheels had already appeared to where Gu Fei was heading. By the time he ran to that area in front, the flames wheels had begun their descent to the ground. Although the two spells could not insta-kill him, Gu Fei's HP was currently not full, so the current magic assault would mostly likely kill him.

This was what facing an expert mercenary group meant. Gu Fei was not the only one who could calculate in advance where a spell would hit. Since the opponents currently had more manpower, their coordinated strikes managed to include the most conservative as well as the most extreme estimation of Gu Fei's possible movement, covering all the routes he would likely take.

"How depressing!" Gu Fei thought of Royal God Call's look of anticipation when he asked him to avenge their deaths. And yet,

here he was, about to die in an even more embarrassing manner than them.

Knowing that the flame wheels would hit him, Gu Fei raced forward as he fervently hoped that his remaining HP would be able to survive the spells' damage output. He kept on running as he waited for the system to announce his fate, yet no further movement occurred above his head. Unexpectedly, Gu Fei managed to escape the spells' AOE with his mad sprint.

Glancing backward, he felt stunned by what he saw.

Sword Demon on Fleetfoot did not break out of the encirclement; instead, he bore the brunt of Descending Wheel of Flames and charged toward the pack of Mages, eliminating two Mages with his practiced footwork and skill in a split second. The flame wheels above Gu Fei dissipated because Sword Demon had forcefully interrupted with his assault the Mages' spell-casting. With the Mages scattering about to dodge the still burning Thief's attack, the Archers behind them sent forth a cloud of arrows toward Sword Demon. Given how tightly knitted the arrows were, Sword Demon naturally failed to escape the bombardment and subsequently turned into a beam of white light. "Listen to Young Master's orders..." Sword Demon sent this private message to Gu Fei right before he disappeared.

Gu Fei froze in place for a bit. Checking the mercenary channel, he saw that Young Master Han had sent out this message: "Head toward 164, 189...."

Gu Fei did not think more about it and just headed toward the indicated direction.

"174, 201."

"189, 176."

"201, 176."

Messages incessantly flashed on the mercenary channel as Young

Master Han constantly sent Gu Fei a fresh batch of coordinates, allowing the latter to move forward without getting hit by any of the enemies' attacks. As Gu Fei left the chasing players further and further behind, the players in front of him tried to block off his path of escape. Unfortunately for them, the route Young Master Han had guided Gu Fei to allowed the latter to escape them unscathed.

Foe-herder, who remained atop the hill, watched Gu Fei's movement and found it to be very perplexing. The route Gu Fei had taken completely avoided any form of obstructions or any incoming mercenaries from Foe-herder's side. It would be understandable for Gu Fei to successfully avoid all of them if they were in an open plain where everyone's location was visible. Presently, however, they were attempting to intercept Gu Fei from places he should not be aware of. And yet, he was still able to successfully circle past them.

This... There must be someone giving him directions! Actually, the first thought that came to Foe-herder was: There's a spy! He suspected that the instructions he had sent on the mercenary channel were being revealed by a spy to the enemies. However, he very quickly dismissed this theory. If that was really the case, why would the two previously risk their lives to rush up the hill to kill him?

A breeze swept through the hilltop from a nearby forest. Foe-herder suddenly looked at the hill across him. Although that hill was not as high as this hill he was on, that place was well-covered by tall trees. If someone was atop a tree... Although the field of view over there could not match his current position, commanding from over there with an overview of this map's terrain would not be difficult!

So that's how it is! Foe-herder was delighted with his discovery and he immediately sent a command: "Team 3 and Team 7, head over to that hill within the forest near you. An enemy should be

hiding atop a tree over there. Hurry!”

Receiving this order, Team 3 and Team 7 promptly made their way toward the hill by the forest.

Young Master Han, who was atop the tree, saw the two teams heading his direction as he continued to direct Gu Fei. “Oh. So you finally found out...” he muttered to himself.

The score right now was 6 against 4.

Chapter 149 - An Imperfect Ending

After receiving the order from Foe-herder, the two teams of Cloud Herder mercenary group headed straight to the hill within the forest.

Finding a hidden person among the dense leaves and branches in the verdant forest was not easy, but none of them gave up searching – even making the Archers and Mages climb up the trees – since Foe-herder was certain that someone was hiding somewhere on this hill.

Young Master Han remained unfazed by what was happening around him and merely continued monitoring Gu Fei who was currently trying to avoid being spotted by the other six enemy teams. Giving another set of instructions, he finally sighed, “Your current position is a blindspot for that hill. Also, I want you to remember these few places.” Young Master Han quickly sent him a few more coordinates and said, “Move sequentially through these coordinates; they should help you for a while, but everything will be up to you after that.” Pausing for a bit, he said almost to himself, “There are still... eleven minutes left. Hang in there.”

“What’s the matter?” Gu Fei gleaned from Young Master Han’s tone of voice, which resembled someone relaying their last will, that something was not right.

“I’ve been discovered. But don’t worry; we will still be in the lead with 6 against 5 kill points even if I get killed. You just have to survive these eleven minutes!” Young Master Han replied in earnest. In his peripheral vision, he could see that two Archers had already climbed up the nearby trees and were now looking all around them.

“Over there!” one of the two Archers spotted Young Master Han and quickly indicated his location to the rest of the search team.

“Run. Keep running and take advantage of your speed. Definitely

do not engage them.” As Young Master Han finished saying this, a ball of fire and an arrow hurtled through the air toward him. Despite Young Master Han’s amazing skills as a Priest, his HP was really low. This was due to his unique way of adding points that was unlike the other Priests who would focus on an Endurance build. Thus, Young Master Han was only able to endure two volleys of the enemies’ concerted attacks before he turned into a stream of white light.

The score changed once more to 6 against 5. Victory and loss now obviously lay in that final kill point. Foe-herder was very much willing to sacrifice all his troops for this final kill point from their last opponent since it would mean the elimination of the entire Young Master’s Elite mercenary group.

Foe-herder sighed. It was no wonder that all his attempts to surround the Mage earlier had been met with failure. He had originally thought that it was due to his instructions being vague, which resulted into his teams being unable to properly encircle the Mage. He should have suspected earlier that someone on the opposing side was secretly giving the Mage directions. Foe-herder was a little frustrated, but he felt better knowing that there was only one opponent to deal with in these final ten minutes.

Foe-herder lost sight of the Mage’s figure after the latter went over a small knoll in a distance. Nonetheless, determining which way the opponent had gone to was easy. With this thought in mind, Foe-herder quickly directed his men to head over the small knoll.

“Team 4 and Team 5, circle around that knoll from the left. Team 1 and Team 2, take the right. Team 6 and Team 8, head over the knoll as well. Team 3 and Team 7, head toward the forest in the 4 o’clock direction.” Foe-herder sent out these commands as he assured himself, There shouldn’t be any further problems this time. While he was daydreaming of success, the figure clad in black robe suddenly appeared at the top of the knoll after clearly going

past it a short while ago. “That guy’s at the top of the knoll! Surround the whole knoll!” Foe-herder immediately ordered.

“Roger!” all the members replied.

Gu Fei, who was standing atop the mound, was visible not only to Foe-herder but to every enemy spreading and surrounding the knoll in its entirety as well.

“Listen to Young Master’s directions...” The final words Sword Demon had left Gu Fei as he sacrificed his life for the latter rang in his ears at this moment.

“Since that’s the case...” Gripping Moonlit Nightfalls in his hand, Gu Fei told himself firmly, “This sword is not a weapon to slay people; right now, it is a booster that will provide me additional 20 points to Agility for my goal to evade the enemies.”

Waving to everyone approaching the mound, Gu Fei retreated through the knoll’s other side and began his mad sprint for freedom. The coordinates that Young Master Han had provided him were clearly displayed on the mercenary channel. “The first one...” Gu Fei muttered to himself as ran toward the first set of coordinates.

Although both sides of the knoll were already surrounded by the Cloud Herder mercenary group’s men, they were unfortunately a lot slower than Gu Fei. The opposing group’s four fastest Archers failed to block Gu Fei in time, so they proceeded to fire off arrows on Homing Projectile toward him.

Four arrows on Homing Projectile flew toward Gu Fei. Holding Moonlit Nightfalls with one hand, he fished out Sacred Flames of Baptism with his other hand. He looked backward to take note of the distance of the arrows to him. When the timing was right, he suddenly pirouetted and knocked off the four arrows hot on his heels with his swords.

The attacks hampered Gu Fei’s speed and allowed the enemies to

close the distance with him by quite a bit. Sadly, all skills had cool-down time, so the four Archers could temporarily not shoot arrows on Homing Projectile. When they fired off arrows on Snipe instead, Gu Fei easily shook them off with a few change of directions.

The four Archers were extremely regretful at this point; they would not have used Homing Projectile altogether had they known that this would happen. They should have taken turns in interfering with Gu Fei's progress, which would allow them to catch up to him eventually. Who would have thought that it was possible to knock off four arrows on Homing Projectile like that, anyway? When the four shot out their arrows, they had already assumed that Gu Fei would be a goner for sure.

It was too late for regrets now, as Gu Fei had already left them in the dust. Those with slower speed, such as the Warriors and Priests, did not even consider chasing after the Mage who had insanely fast speed. In just a short while, Gu Fei had gotten out of the encirclement and left everyone far behind.

Foe-herder knew that things were going south when he saw Gu Fei successfully evade his men's pursuit. Given the Mage's monstrously fast speed, it was impossible for Cloud Herder mercenary group to form any sort of encirclement to deal with him.

Enclosing and capturing Gu Fei with his speed would require Foe-herder to set up a net across a wide area and to limit his space gradually. Their attempted encirclement just then was akin to letting a bird leave its cage or a fish to get out of the fishing net and return into the sea. Trying to encircle him again... would ten minutes be enough? No. Only nine minutes were left now.

Foe-herder's forehead began to sweat profusely. He no longer dared to deploy his men so casually like before. While attempting to get a read of Gu Fei's destination, he quickly organized his mercenaries into new groups based on their speed. The slower

teams would exert pressure from the front to cut off all possible retreats for Gu Fei; meanwhile, the faster teams would close in from the sides in a wing-like formation. The goal this time was to enclose and keep Gu Fei in a huge pocket.

Unexpectedly, Gu Fei had rushed out of one segment of the enclosing wing and suddenly veered off into another direction. This one move of Gu Fei instantly caused the two-wing formation to fail forming the pocket that Foe-herder had just strategized.

“How is this possible?! Could there still be someone secretly guiding him?!” Foe-herder exclaimed in his astonishment. However, the score that the system had calculated was irrefutable; there really was only one person left in the opposing mercenary group at this point.

Foe-herder tried forming a new formation again, but just as his fresh plan was about to succeed, Gu Fei had once more unpredictably changed his direction.

Foe-herder was now utterly flabbergasted. He was clearly doing the entrapment, yet he could not help but feel that he was the one being entrapped by an even bigger net.

He would have to change his tactics in order to shed himself off of this unseen, bigger net, and to properly entrap Gu Fei. While it was possible for him to come up with a new plan to force Gu Fei into a corner, he simply did not have time to do so at the moment. After all, there were only six minutes left until this match's end.

The entire mercenary group was in a mess right now. Originally, none of these men thought that this six-man mercenary group was worth their attention or time. All of them thought that this round would be the same as yesterday's match, where they could easily tour about the PvP arena and leave it with a 'perfect' score. And yet, the unexpected happened and they were now in such a disheartening situation. The opponent only had to survive these six minutes and his group would achieve victory. No... That was

not right either, as only five minutes were left now.

Gu Fei took note of his surroundings as he ran and spotted a few heads occasionally popping up here and there. Someone was still standing atop that faraway hill; he reckoned that the person was the Berserker from before. Gu Fei restrained himself from rushing over to exchange blows with the Berserker and continued to rigidly follow the path that Young Master Han had set for him through the series of coordinates.

Although he still felt dissatisfied with Young Master Han's method of doing things, he decided to heed Sword Demon's words and curbed his desire to PvP.

Time slipped by. Gu Fei finished running Young Master Han's coordinates with only two minutes left to the PvP match. At the moment, he found himself atop a small hill with the members of Cloud Herder mercenary group heading in his direction in a disorderly fashion.

Gu Fei felt somewhat anxious... With only two minutes left, he did not wish to risk their win by rushing toward the enemies and meeting a similar fate to his dead comrades. That would be too much of a disappointment, after all. If it were just him alone, he would long revel in slaughtering the enemies, consequences be damned. But right now, the fate of the mercenary group was heavily resting upon his shoulders... F*ck! Did I fall for Young Master's tricks yet again? Gu Fei thought to himself as he ran toward a direction where no enemy was visible.

One minute... Thirty seconds... Ten seconds....

Foe-herder finally sat down on the ground in dejection, "We lost... But it's such an unmerited loss!" All the Cloud Herder's members bellowed helplessly as they were sent out of the PvP arena.

With this, the second round of the mercenary PvP tournament was concluded. Young Master's Elite mercenary group eliminated

Cloud Herder mercenary group with a score of 6 against 5.

“Where are they?! Where the hell are those cowards from Young Master’s Elite?!” Beyond the teleportation array outside the Hall of Mercenaries, the Cloud Herder’s members gathered together and incessantly cursed up and down the street, trying to find the members of the mercenary group that they had just lost to.

When he exited the teleportation array, Gu Fei was immediately dragged off by Sword Demon to a secluded corner, where the other members of Young Master’s Elite were huddling. With curses reverberating everywhere, they, especially Royal God Call, could not help but show a distasteful expression on their faces.

Young Master Han listened for a while before shaking his head and saying, “The tactics we have used this time are still imperfect. We should have covered our faces during the match just now.”

Everyone remained silent for a good while in the face of his statement.

“F*ck! How can this still be considered a win!” Royal God Call was the first to explode, resentfully saying, “With your command and coordination with Miles, we totally had the ability to take them down. Why did we have to fight them like that?!”

Although they won, the way they had achieved it was neither beautiful nor satisfactory. Cloud Herder mercenary group’s unending curses were a testament to this fact.

Young Master Han smiled coldly before replying, “Our goal is to win this whole mercenary PvP tournament. To do that, we have to rely on a battle strategy that affects the outcome of everything instead of depending on tactics that can only win us one match.”

Royal God Call was taken aback, “What strategy?”

“You’ll find out very soon,” Young Master Han answered mysteriously.

“Fleeing about until the time runs out is not the least bit

challenging!” Royal God Call cried indignantly.

“Challenging? Why don’t you eat ice cream in a blizzard or take a piss in a rising gale? That’s very challenging,” Young Master Han remarked dryly.

“What do you mean by that?!” Royal God Call angrily yelled.

“A meaningful ending or a meaningless challenge, which will you choose?” Young Master Han asked.

“There are some challenges themselves which are very meaningful to me...” Gu Fei suddenly interjected.

Chapter 150 - Forever in Flowers

Gu Fei's words left Young Master Han inexplicably stunned. His pure intention of 'using kung fu' brought him to Parallel World, so his way of thinking somewhat differed from the other players. As such, Young Master Han was momentarily left speechless by his words.

"Alright. Let's speak more of this tomorrow! Don't you four still have the guild versus guild tournament to take care of?" Brother Assist addressed Gu Fei and the other three men who were part of other guilds.

Nodding their heads, the four quietly departed toward the same location. Intuitively, the four separated from one another as if they were strangers along the way.

Only Brother Assist and Sword Demon were left by the the square outside the Hall of Mercenaries. Brother Assist wiped the sweat off his brows as he peeked out of the corner that they were in. "Let's quickly leave as well! Cloud Herder's men are almost on us."

Sword Demon smiled slightly, "I'm not afraid of them; I can use Stealth."

Brother Assist paused, patting Sword Demon's arm as he laughed bitterly, "Oh, you...."

Despite what was just said between the two, they still took a detour to sneak past Cloud Herder. Since Young Master's Elite's members came face to face with Cloud Herder's members just a while ago, it was highly likely for them to recognize the six men.

This sort of tournaments usually placed everyone on an equal playing field with no death penalty, so very few people would hold grudges. As for those few people who would bear hatred against others in such fair fights, they more often than not had tyrannical, unprincipled, and other negative personalities. In the Cloud

Herder's members' case, it was their extreme unwillingness to admit defeat that bred this heavy grudge against Young Master's Elite.

Sword Demon and Brother Assist went a big round before finally leaving the square outside the Hall of Mercenaries. "Shall we head to the bar?" Brother Assist suggested.

Sword Demon did not say no to his suggestion, so the two made their way toward Ray's Bar. Their usual room was taken, so they occupied a different room.

"Today's match led to a bit of disharmony within our group!" Brother Assist began to speak about the matter once he sat down.

Sword Demon smiled bitterly. It was not just 'a bit of disharmony'; in fact, it was no exaggeration to say that this event could even lead to the disbandment of their mercenary group. Fortunately, everyone had been through thick and thin since Parallel World's open beta days. Although they had not done many things together, spending time every day at Ray's Bar with one another at least fostered a strong bond among them all. Moreover, they did not lose in this match, so the situation did not escalate too much.

More importantly, everyone had a pretty good grasp of Young Master Han's personality after knowing him for quite a while. With their great mental resilience, they could one way or another tolerate Young Master Han's illogical approach to today's PvP match.

If this was how they had done their first mercenary mission together, Sword Demon believed that Royal God Call would have left without a word and Gu Fei would have slain Young Master Han on the spot. That man was a seriously violent person... Gu Fei's high PK value and his days of slaying people for 'Bounty Mission' had left a deep impression on everyone in the mercenary group.

"How much do you understand of Young Master's intention for

employing such a PvP tactic?” Brother Assist asked. Sword Demon had been Young Master Han’s online partner for so many years already; even if he did not have Young Master Han’s mind for tactics, Sword Demon at least had a better idea of his intention than others. Interpersonal trust was built up through mutual understanding, after all. Even in an online game, it would be virtually impossible to partner with someone that a person did not trust or understand.

Sword Demon thought for a moment before saying, “He must have planned out today’s tactic as he entered the preparation map, only deciding to set his plan in motion after confirming the opposing group’s head count.”

Brother Assist was astonished, “That’s only several minutes before the match began!”

“Yes. He probably had several different ideas from the start, but when it was time to begin the match, he chose to carry on with the plan to achieve a victory without finishing off every opponents. However, an accident happened at the beginning,” Sword Demon said.

“Accident?”

“Wounds did not manage to eliminate any opponents, causing us to fall behind on kill points. That’s something he must not have expected,” Sword Demon explained, continuing, “But... It’s very common for unexpected accidents to happen while plans are underway. As long as adjustments are done in time, the main strategy will still be used. From today’s method of assault, he clearly intended to achieve this sort of victory.”

“This sort of victory... Hmm...” Brother Assist seemed to have understood something.

More people were gathered at the plaza outside the Main Hall of Guilds than at the square outside the Hall of Mercenaries. All players queued with their guild leaders to enter the teleportation

portal in an orderly fashion. On his way over, Gu Fei was pondering on something, If Amethyst Rebirth were to meet a guild as cohesive as Cloud Herder mercenary group, victory would not be achieved with just my and Svelte Dancer's efforts. If that time ever comes, should I kill for the fun of it or deal with the enemies as best as I can while considering the guild's benefit in mind?

At this moment, this saying entered his mind: 'With great power, comes great responsibility.' This adage had essentially been vetoed by his father in reality. Even when he already possessed great skills, his father did not allow him to take on some noble calling, such as protecting world peace. This made him feel absolutely helpless. And now he had to resort to playing Superman in this online game... Sigh.

As Gu Fei was thinking of all this, he had unknowingly walked through the teleportation array and was instantly teleported into the 'changing room'.

"Hi..." Gu Fei greeted everyone. The ladies had arrived earlier than him as usual. However, the ladies' mood today seemed to be very different from yesterday's jocular banter. Not only were all the ladies present, all of them wore a serious expression on their faces as well.

Could it be that my and Svelte Dancer's indomitable performance yesterday made all these ladies gain a bit of bravery through shame, and they decided to seriously fight the PvP matches from now on, too? Gu Fei asked to himself.

"Miles, you're here," July welcomed Gu Fei.

"Yup!"

"How was your mercenary PvP match today?" she politely asked. This way of greeting the others had started trending in Parallel World ever since the PvP tournament event began. Asking "How was your guild match" before a mercenary PvP tournament and "How was your mercenary PvP match" before a guild versus guild

tournament was now a common act that everyone in-game performed.

“Close win,” Gu Fei smiled tightly.

“Congrats,” July said. With that, she clapped her hands to get the ladies attention and introduce their opposing guild for today’s guild match.

Gu Fei listened and slowly understood why everyone seemed to have brought out their fighting spirit today.

Today’s opposing guild for Amethyst Rebirth was called Forever in Flowers. It was a level 1 guild with fifty members. The problem was that this guild was established by a bunch of male players who were notorious philanderers. It was unknown if the system purposely matched up a guild filled with lewd men with a guild filled with pure ladies. July looked up some information about their current match-up from the system and was left in utter rage when she read the opposing guild’s lecherous motto. Briefing everyone about the current opponents upon her return, all the ladies’ will to fight was instantly kindled.

Now that she was explaining the matter in greater detail, the ladies were even more agitated. Everyone promptly condemned that bunch of lechers to the seventh hell. Their words kept flowing nonstop as they slowly began to include not just the fifty lechers of Forever in Flowers but the entire male species as well in their verbal condemnations.

When their condemnation even reached all the way to the photo scandal that had happened to a certain popular male artist at the start of the year in reality, July clapped her hands to draw all the ladies’ attention once more.

All focused their gazes at her, thinking that she was about to express a unique view on this matter.

July said, “There are still three minutes until the match begins;

all should make their preparations!” It was indeed a unique view. Gu Fei believed that all the ladies here had long forgotten what they were supposed to be doing here besides July.

Amazing! Gu Fei could not help but think, Our current meeting before the battle... is filled with unity. Despite the tension, it does not lack solemnity or liveliness as well. “Today, I must kill more than you. Hmph!” Just as everyone was about to enter the PvP arena, Svelte Dancer said this to Gu Fei.

The Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies saw a different scenery when they finally arrived at the real PvP arena.

“My fellow sisters, let’s kill!” someone yelled. All the ladies showed their determination by echoing this battlecry. Gu Fei kept his mouth shut this whole time, as he did not agree with that ‘my fellow sisters’ call with him being a ‘brother’.

“CHARGE!” With a bellow, all the ladies dashed forward.

In the blink of an eye, Svelte Dancer disappeared out of sight, and he was left behind with the Priests and Warriors once more....

What’s so different here than what happened yesterday? Gu Fei was irate. Once more, he matched his pace with the Priests and Warriors.

Luo Luo, who was beside him, also had a severe expression on her face today and did not teasingly bestow Heal on to Gu Fei like usual; instead, she asked him intently, “Miles, why aren’t you charging onward?”

When Gu Fei did not reply, she asked, “Do you need me to add fuel to your fire?” Lifting her staff, she acted as if she would bestow Heal on to him, so he quickly ran after Svelte Dancer.

Svelte Dancer was bellicose. Wanting to seize the initiative from Gu Fei, she pushed her limits and sprinted straight toward the opposing guild’s spawn point. However, she found no one around when she arrived there.

Circling the area twice, Svelte Dancer still found no one. She roared in her impotent rage, “Where’s everyone?! Get outta here!”

“Babe, over here!” someone actually answered.

Svelte Dancer turned her head fast toward the voice’s origin and spotted a few men by a small knoll making funny faces at her. Without hesitation, she bounded toward them.

With their mouths drooling, they stuttered their admiration for the pretty lady before them, “Ahh... Ahh...” This went on for quite some time before someone among these men finally said, “G*dd*mn. This babe is too fierce. Let’s run!” These men finally felt terrified when they saw how Svelte Dancer had managed to cover half the distance in a split second.

The men stood up in unison from atop the knoll and ran in five different directions.

Svelte Dancer paused for a moment when she got on top of the knoll. Helpless, she casually chose a target to chase. However, she ran no more than a few steps when she saw a figure clad in black robe opposite her hurtling himself over to kill the targets. Svelte Dancer found this figure to be very familiar! She quickly hollered, “DON’T YOU DARE! THAT IS MINE!”

Her scream arrived too late, though. The man clad in black robe caught up to her target and, with a lift of his arm, turned the target into a stream of white light. “What’s the situation?” Gu Fei asked about the status of the PvP match as he ran toward Svelte Dancer.

“You’re not allowed to steal my kills again!” Svelte Dancer clutched Gu Fei’s arms and shook him.

“Don’t mess around! There are forty-nine more people out there!” Gu Fei did not know whether to laugh or cry at her pettiness, so he just pointed her toward a direction, “There are men hiding inside that forest.”

“You think you can trick me with that?!” Svelte Dancer spat

those words with vitriol as she turned to chase after the other four men who had previously dispersed.

“Sigh... To think my kindness would be mistaken for trickery.” With that, Gu Fei entered the forest he had indicated to Svelte Dancer himself.

“Stop hiding and come out already!” Gu Fei knocked upon the tree trunks as he shouted hoarsely.

“Drunk bro! Drunk bro, over here!” someone suddenly called.

Gu Fei followed the voice in shock. “Fireball!” A ball of fire formed on his palm just as he reflexively said this word. “Bleh!” Gu Fei quickly spat to extinguish the ball of fire in his hand, asking as he stared at the mousy Fireball hiding behind a tree, “Why are you here?”

“This is my guild!” Fireball replied.

“Forever in Flowers?” Gu Fei asked.

“That’s right!” Fireball nodded his head vigorously.

Gu Fei suddenly felt guilty. Fireball could be considered as the first friend he had made in Parallel World, yet he did not even know which guild he belonged to, showing how little he cared for his Fire bro.

That was when Fireball suddenly kicked a few trees around him, “Get the f*ck outta here and meet him. There’s no need for me to tell you guys how awesome Drunk bro is, right?”

Five other men, with eyes teeming in admiration for Gu Fei, appeared from behind the trees. They regarded him like a god even as they called out to him in the same way Fireball had done, “Drunk bro.”

“Uhh...” Gu Fei did not know how to respond to this! They were supposed to be enemies, yet they actually treated him as if he was one of their own with Fireball taking the lead! How could Gu Fei

kill them at this rate?

“Drunk bro, how did you get into Amethyst Rebirth? Please teach these fellow bros!” someone pleaded while gazing at Gu Fei expectantly.

Now that he knew why they idolized him so much, Gu Fei could feel beads of sweat forming on his forehead. He steadied himself before answering, “It’s all a misunderstanding.” He then began to tell them about Xi Xiaotian tricking him in the past. “Although they have the number now, they decided not to kick me out of the guild once we all became more familiar with one another. That is how I managed to stay there till now!” Gu Fei concluded.

“Ahh! Why am I not lucky like you?!” A few of them lamented as they beat their chests in sadness.

Gu Fei was once more left speechless.

Fireball suddenly became alert as he hushed everyone, “Quiet. Another babe is here.”

These men quickly ducked back behind the trees, including Fireball. Seeing Gu Fei standing there dumb as a doornail, Fireball quickly called out to him, “Drunk bro, over here!” He pulled Gu Fei over and shared a tree with him.

Hiding behind the tree with Fireball, Gu Fei saw July, Will-low, and a few Archers and Thieves rushing to the clearing within the trees.

“Ah. That slender babe isn’t bad,” someone said, pointing to Will-low.

“That one is not bad, too... She is a Fighter, I think?” That was July.

“Drunk bro, be careful. Don’t let them see you,” Fireball felt that Gu Fei was a little too bold with his sneaking, so he gave the latter this advice out of concern for him.

Gu Fei was in tears as this situation unfolded before him. F*ck*ng hell; just what am I doing exactly?

Chapter 151 - Hunt

When July, Will-low, and the other ladies with fast movement speed reached the opposing guild's spawn point, they promptly searched the area, just like what Svelte Dancer had done earlier, and naturally found nothing.

"I'll head into the forest to take a look," Will-low said as she began to walk toward the forest.

Gu Fei could see the sudden excitement of the gentlemen around him. They were exchanging looks among themselves, as if they were conveying "A beauty is coming over!" with their eyes.

The dim light of this gloomy forest could be eliciting these men's desire to do something criminal.

"This lot. Don't tell me..." Gu Fei was jolted by a sudden thought. Something like that should not be possible in this game... But what if this guild versus guild tournament operated differently from the usual Parallel World's system, allowing players to initiate a different kind of physical assault to the others?

"Hold on. Let's wait for more of us to arrive before entering the forest together; there might be an ambush within," July stopped Will-low.

Fireball and his fellow brothers had an extremely disappointed expression on their faces when Will-low did not continue heading toward the forest.

"What are you guys up to?" Gu Fei whispered.

"This is a guild match!" Fireball whispered back.

Well. At least this lot still remembers that this is a PvP tournament! Gu Fei was grateful and hurriedly reminded them once more, "I'm from the opposing guild, too!"

Fireball fearfully regarded Gu Fei, "Drunk bro, we're not

interested in men—”

“Go to hell!” Gu Fei cursed.

That was when the person next to Fireball sniggered, “He he! Xiao Lizi and the four others were killed.”

Fireball gleefully and smugly said, “Serves them right. Those idiots didn’t even gather intel first before picking up babes. That babe they had the balls to piss off is Svelte Dancer herself!”

“That’s right!” The rest of them happily agreed, feeling a touch of schadenfreude.

This guild has such a warped relationship! Gu Fei thought to himself. This was a guild versus guild tournament, yet Fireball and his friends looked as if they were about to break open the champagne bottles to celebrate the deaths of their guildmates.

It seemed that this bunch of men cared not for the match’s outcome and were just here purely to enjoy themselves. Evidently, their intention was to meet the ladies of their dreams and show off in front of them!

Gu Fei could not help but smile at their pure intention. Such situation was something he had seen many times before due to his profession. In the school Gu Fei was teaching, physical education classes for boys and girls were conducted separately, but whenever there were joint classes, a majority of the boys would act as if they were on dope in front of the girls. The sudden burst of bravery, strength, and endurance would allow them to uncomplainingly run for ten kilometers when asked. In fact, the boys would rather die than admit that they were tired at times like that.

“This bunch is really...” As Gu Fei was muttering this to himself, more and more ladies of Amethyst Rebirth began to gather on the fringe of the forest. June’s Rain and Luo Luo, the ladies with the slowest speed, managed to make it here, so it was obvious that Amethyst Rebirth had all finished gathering at this part of the

map.

“Hey! I know those two!” Fireball cheerfully remarked.

“Which ones?” everyone asked in astonishment.

Fireball pointed to Luo Luo and June’s Rain, “That one and that one!”

“Nice! How did you get to know them?” Several expressed their surprise. Knowing two out of the present ladies was already pretty good for these men. Since the two that Fireball actually knew were rather beautiful, they now regarded him as a great person.

“It’s all thanks to Drunk bro,” Fireball honestly admitted.

All these men realized something. What was a great person compared to a man who knew all the fifty plus ladies? That man was essentially a god – a god that they would burn incense for and pray to.

Gu Fei felt awkward when he saw these men’s worshipping gazes, “Don’t say it like that.”

“Ah! It looks like they are about to enter the forest!” someone exclaimed.

Gu Fei shifted his head to look and saw that the now organized party of ladies was indeed about to begin searching the forest with June’s Rain in the lead. She was a bit of an airhead that absolutely detested male players who harbored ill designs for her female friends, and Gu Fei had known about this when he first got to know her. She even called herself a lesbian; although it was a poor lie on her part, it showed her conviction to not be harassed by any male players.

“They’re all here!” The men’s excited voices betrayed a hint of nervousness, making it hard for Gu Fei to determine their real intention.

“Aren’t you guys planning to flee?” Gu Fei asked.

“Why would we do that? This is the moment we have all been waiting for,” Fireball replied seriously.

Gu Fei was at a loss. There were a total of six male players here including Fireball. Were they gaming experts that could handle fifty plus female players by themselves?

Just as he was pondering about this, June’s Rain, who was the closest to the men, suddenly cried out in astonishment, “AH!”

“What is it?” A few other ladies quickly rushed to Xiaoyu’s side to see what was going on and their cries followed soon after.

“What’s going on there?!” Gu Fei asked, shocked.

“It’s a trap we have set,” Fireball answered.

“Quickly do what you have to do, Fireball,” the others anxiously prompted Fireball.

“Here I come!” Fireball flashily appeared from behind the tree and grandly saluted to the ladies before him, “How do you do, m’ladies!” Following this, he chanted a spell, “Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!” The resulting inferno instantly ignited patches of trees with June’s Rain and all the ladies trapped within.

“Drunk bro, let’s leave!” Fireball pulled Gu Fei to run away with him, and the other five men had long retreated deeper into the forest. The ladies behind were frantically escaping the AOE of Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno, while several Priests were trying to keep everyone alive with their healing. Gu Fei dazedly went deeper into the forest with Fireball, What is this?! Am I a turncoat now?

Fireball and the others seemed to have made preparations for this, as they stopped at a certain spot inside the forest. While the five dropped on all fours to the ground and got busy, Fireball explained to Gu Fei, “These Archers finished their Job Class Advancement and are now Hunters. The skill they are currently using is called ‘Hunting Trap’.”

“I like the word ‘hunting’.” Someone among the five flashed Gu Fei a crooked smile as he set a trap up.

“Tsk. What’s so great about this skill? It just stops a target’s movement for a few seconds and it doesn’t even deal a bit of damage,” Fireball spat with contempt.

“G*dd*mn. How else would your sh*tty spell hit without this?!” The five accomplices raised their heads in unison and cursed at him.

Gu Fei was quite surprised when he heard this. This small guild that he had never considered as a big deal apparently had quite a few members who had already done their Job Class Advancement. At the current stage of the game, only those players who would play day and night had reached level 40, and the rest that would only play at night were still at the same levels as the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies.

Online games were truly a world with an inclusive community that even creeps could achieve something over. And yet, Gu Fei could only think of one word to describe the sight of these few Hunters setting traps for the ladies: obscene.

“Done!” The five stood up once their traps were set in place.

Gu Fei stepped forward and had a look. Five contraptions resembling mouse traps were poorly hidden beneath the fallen leaves, twigs, and tall grass carpeting the forest ground. Thankfully, the poor lighting caused by the trees and the detritus strewn everywhere on the ground had helped in masking these traps. People must be blind to even find themselves falling for these snares if these were set up in well-lighted places like Yunduan City.

These Archers felt somewhat embarrassed when they saw Gu Fei’s amazed expression and hurriedly explained, “The higher one’s proficiency in the ‘Hunting Trap’ skill, the better he or she can hide a trap and the higher the damage it can cause. We’ve only

learned this skill not too long ago.”

“Oh...” Gu Fei could only utter this.

“Alright! Let’s quickly hide ourselves!” As the Hunters found themselves trees to hide, Fireball dragged Gu Fei to stand beside him once more.

“You can’t kill people like this! Why didn’t you five shoot arrows just then?” Gu Fei asked in puzzlement. Fireball obviously did not have high Magic Attack Power, so his Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno could not insta-kill any of the ladies. However, it would have been a different story if the five Hunters had fired off their arrows together. Although the five Hunters went through their Job Advancement at level 40, the skills that they had learned from the preceding forty levels still remained with them, so they would still be able to shoot arrows!

Unexpectedly, Gu Fei’s words greatly frightened these men, “Shoot these babes? Drunk bro, are you insane?”

“He he! ‘Shoot’ these babes he says...” When someone repeated the words lewdly, the rest could not help but sinisterly laugh along with him first before immediately regarding Gu Fei with a horrified expression again.

Lewd! They are far too lewd! Gu Fei roared inside him.

Fireball solemnly said to Gu Fei, “Drunk bro, we don’t intend to kill these babes. We just wanna tease and have a little fun with them.”

“Hunting babes. He he!” someone added.

Gu Fei finally understood that these fellows were not really evil at heart and were just rascals that wanted to fantasize about the ladies from afar and capture the women’s distressed look in their mental spank banks.

“Ahh!” Fireball seemed to have recalled something, “Drunk bro, you have been following us all this time... How are you going to

earn kill points?”

Gu Fei felt very gratified that Fireball had remembered his original goal for coming here.

“How about this! I’ll tell you the hiding locations of the other guys, and you can earn some kill points from them, instead!” Fireball proposed.

Gu Fei was amazed. This is downright betrayal! Is he not afraid of what his fellow brothers will think of his action?

Unexpectedly, the other five men agreed with Fireball’s suggestion, “That’s a great idea! Drunk bro, go bring Svelte Dancer with you and kill them all!”

“Tsk! Drunk bro doesn’t need any helper. He can solo them all,” Fireball said dismissively.

“Is that so...” The five did not say anything more. Although they were very impressed that Gu Fei had managed to get himself into an all-female guild, Gu Fei was only at level 39. This meant that Gu Fei was a whole level and Job Class Advancement away from them in terms of raw power, so the five did not feel a shred of respect toward him in this aspect.

“Hmph! You guys don’t know a fart at all!” Fireball was unlike the other five skeptics. Pulling Gu Fei to one side, he seriously said, “Drunk bro, they are at these places....”

The Forever in Flowers Guild’s players were basically split into five or six-man teams, each hiding in a different spot to take advantage of the ladies when they were alone. Once Fireball betrayed almost all his brothers’ positions in the map, he looked at Gu Fei expectantly and said, “The rest is up to you, Drunk bro.”

“Are you sure this is fine? What if they find out?” Gu Fei asked, worried for Fireball.

“Drunk bro, why would you tell them anything?” Surprised, Fireball asked back instead.

Gu Fei was left speechless once more.

“They’re here! The babes have arrived!” someone among the six men excitedly announced.

“You go ahead, Drunk bro! We’re gonna continue our hunt,” Fireball returned back to his position, and the six men proceeded to intently observe the direction that the ladies were heading.

Sighing, Gu Fei thought that this must be what it meant for someone to borrow another’s knife to kill someone. “But I’m not the one being killed or the one lending the knife; I’m the knife itself....”

Chapter 152 - So Close to Disbandment

The ladies' somewhat muffled screams and exclamations reached Gu Fei's ears as he exited the forest from the other side. The light from flames flashed periodically behind him, and he could somehow imagine the waves of heat radiating from them.

"He he he! We hunted five more," Fireball proudly sent this crude, short message to Gu Fei.

Gu Fei smiled wryly, "How very tasteless!" Lifting his head to determine his direction, he bounded toward one of the locations Fireball had just provided him.

It was at this moment in time that July had sent out a message on the guild channel, "The enemies in the forest are very loathsome and abhorrent. Everyone, watch your steps. They are using the traps a level 40 Archer will obtain when one advance his or her job class to a Hunter."

As this message was sent out, Svelte Dancer who had been quiet all this time eagerly asked, "Where are they?! I'll come over right now!" All of Forever in Flowers' fifty members were present for today's PvP match. So far, there were five deaths on their end – one by Gu Fei and the other four by Svelte Dancer. Those five casualties were the five players who had teased Svelte Dancer from the start. She had not gotten one kill point ever since then, so a burning anger steadily built up within her. When July gave her the direction, Svelte Dancer hurriedly asked, "And Miles? Where's he?"

"Do I have to come, too?" Gu Fei asked.

"No! I alone will do," Svelte Dancer quickly rejected his offer.

"I knew you would say that," Gu Fei sighed. She's so competitive. Since I've gotten a huge amount of information from Fireball, should I share it with her? With this thought in mind, he sent out a

message to her, “Found a lot of enemies. Do you wanna join me?”

“A lot? How many?” Svelte Dancer asked, skeptical.

“Short of thirty, I think?” Gu Fei sincerely replied.

“Tsk! Who are you trying to fool! I would find them long ago if there really were thirty of them gathered together,” Svelte Dancer derided.

Gu Fei had no words to say. Since it was not convenient for him to reveal how he had gotten his hands on this information, he could only sigh and say, “I’ll take them myself, then.”

“Hmph! Go do it yourself!” Svelte Dancer snubbed.

Gu Fei shook his head, “You better not regret it!”

“Nagger!” Svelte Dancer countered.

“It’s really hard to be a good person!” Gu Fei sighed inwardly. The information Fireball had given him did not just cover the men’s hiding places, it also included routes for him to sneak attack the men; truly, Fireball had thoroughly betrayed his brothers.

Upon arriving at his first small hill, Gu Fei circled his way to the back of it and looked up. Five players were craning their necks to peek at something before them as they lay sprawled on the hilltop. Gu Fei immediately recalled how Fireball had crawled into the tall grass to hide from the higher level monsters when he brought the latter to grind for levels for the first time; it looked exactly like what these players were doing! Truly, birds of the same feather flocked together. Thinking of this, he clambered up the hill and reached the enemies’ backs very shortly, “Hey!”

“What?” The five actually did not turn around.

Gu Fei irately stabbed his Moonlit Nightfalls into the ground and said, “Your sense of awareness is far too low!”

“Speak if you’ve got something to say. Otherwise, scram!” They were still staring intently ahead and were very much unwilling to

turn around.

Gu Fei could only stab Moonlit Nightfalls into the person on the extreme left.

“Stop messing around!” The person dismissively waved him off without looking back, but he did so when he saw that his HP had dropped quite a lot. “You’re mad! What are you stabbing me so heavily for?!” Properly looking at Gu Fei, the player was momentarily stunned, “Who are you?”

The other four men finally turned around when they heard their companion ask this question, before freezing and asking in unison as well, “Who are you?!”

“Are you a new recruit? When did you join? I haven’t seen you before... Oh, what’s your name?” someone asked him a series of questions.

Gu Fei did not know how to answer all his questions and simply said, “I’m from Amethyst Rebirth.”

“Amethyst Rebirth!” The five widened their eyes. “Are you a woman?” They looked at Gu Fei from different angles to see if he had any feminine features on certain parts of his body, yet his voice alone had already convinced them that he was truly a male. This was when the five finally realized something: There was a man in Amethyst Rebirth.

“Has Amethyst Rebirth begun accepting male players?!” They were very excited. “The f*ck we’re doing here for then?! Let’s disband the guild and join Amethyst Rebirth! Quickly tell Moony!” They spoke among themselves, completely forgetting about Gu Fei.

“Ahem...” Gu Fei had no wish to be ignored.

Everyone smilingly regarded him, “We’ll all be brothers next time.”

Gu Fei crashed right there and then. He had only said four verbal lines to these five from start to finish, yet Forever in Flowers Guild

was already on the verge of disbanding.

Over by Forever in Flowers' guild channel, this atomic-bomb-like information was thrown out. "Moony! Did you know that Amethyst Rebirth has begun accepting male players?"

"Eh?! Who said that?!" The speed of this reply from Guild Leader [Sakurazaka](#) Moony was very fast. Truly, he was far too wise regarding sexual matters for his age that he even came up with the 'Hunting Babes with Trap' method. But despite his focus mostly being on chasing skirts, Sakurazaka Moony's level was not low. In fact, he was the level 40 Hunter that was ranked eighteenth on the Archer leaderboard.

"The guy right next to us! He is from Amethyst Rebirth!" someone among the five men answered.

"Is that so?!" Sakurazaka Moony exclaimed in astonishment, adding, "F*ck! Let's disband the guild and join them, then!"

"All hail, Moony!" they praised.

At the same time, the rest of Forever in Flowers' players hiding in various spots in the map had also seen the big news posted on the guild channel. They were bombarding one another with questions to inquire more details about what was just posted. In the end, they were all saying in unison, "Disband! Disband this guild immediately!"

Meanwhile, Fireball and his fellow friends, who knew the truth of the matter, felt helpless upon seeing the chaos on the guild channel. They tried saying a few words, yet those were quickly buried by the other members' incessant messages. Furthermore, the six were still busy dealing with the entire Amethyst Rebirth Guild that they could really not spare a moment to deal with this problem. Fireball hurriedly sent Gu Fei a message, "Drunk bro, I only asked you to slay them. What did you do to get the whole guild to disband?"

Gu Fei did not know how this had happened as well. Since he could not see the chaos on the Forever in Flowers' guild channel, he was unaware that such a huge matter had been happening in these few minutes. Currently, he was blankly staring at the five men gleefully chatting before him, trying to decide whether to slay them now or wait for a bit more. "Screw that! I don't know anything, either!" was Gu Fei's reply to Fireball.

Knowing that a misunderstanding must have occurred somewhere, Fireball quickly sent Sakurazaka Moony a message, "Moony, don't be so hasty. I know that guy from Amethyst Rebirth and he got in by accident. Amethyst Rebirth isn't accepting any male players at all."

"How did that happen?" Sakurazaka Moony bewilderedly fired back.

"I don't have the time to explain everything in detail right now; just know that there's no way we can join Amethyst Rebirth," Fireball replied.

Sakurazaka Moony immediately retracted his recent announcement by explaining that the information he had received was false, but his words were also very easily drowned on the guild channel by the members' excited chattering about the matter. In his anger, Sakurazaka Moony immediately changed the guild channel's setting and made it so that only the guild leader could send out a message. With that done, he unhurriedly cleared out the guild channel's chat logs and calmly sent out a message: "Upon closer inspection, the matter of Amethyst Rebirth accepting male players was proven to be untrue."

Since they could no longer send out messages on the guild channel, all resorted to privately messaging the guild leader to the point of causing Sakurazaka Moony's personal inbox to incessantly ring with notifications. With over fifty different messages stuffed in his inbox that continued to increase by the second, Sakurazaka Moony had no choice but to revert the guild channel to how it was

and say, “Chat here, but do it one at a time. Maintain a clean channel.”

The ones who understood the matter were Fireball’s group and the five men beside Gu Fei – the rumor started from them, after all – so Sakurazaka Moony called out to the five men by name and asked for a proper explanation.

“What we said is true. The guy is standing beside us now,” the five insisted.

“What did he say?”

“That he’s from Amethyst Rebirth.”

“And? Did he say that Amethyst Rebirth is accepting male players now?” Sakurazaka Moony inquired further.

Not one of them responded to this question this time, as Gu Fei had obviously not said anything about that.

“Next time, clear up everything first before assuming anything.” Sakurazaka Moony was extremely angry. Disbanding the guild was no big deal, but giving everyone false hope was a grave sin, especially since Sakurazaka Moony was the most delighted when he heard the news.

The five men were completely crestfallen as they looked at Gu Fei once more.

“Shall we begin now?” Gu Fei asked as he perceived the change in everyone’s attitude.

“Begin? What are we beginning?” They dispiritedly asked.

“The guild match, of course!” Gu Fei did not know whether to laugh or cry at their lifeless reaction.

“What’s there to gain by pitting ourselves against you? Go and play by yourself.” They were currently irate, so they did not regard Gu Fei seriously. This was even more so when they saw on their Appraisal that Gu Fei was only a level 39 Mage.

“Take this!” Gu Fei no longer spared another word on this matter. A PvP match was all about doing one’s best, after all. He was already showing the five men mercy by not launching a sneak attack on them when he had the chance earlier. It would be far too unreasonable for him to refrain from attacking them simply because they did not wish to take him on, right?

Gu Fei swung his sword downward toward a target, yet the person evaded it by tumbling backward while shouting, “Oi, dude! You really plan to attack us?!”

“Of course,” Gu Fei said matter-of-factly as he raised his sword to strike once more. That slash just then was not really an attack, but more of a warning to them that he was serious about wanting to PvP.

“Kill, kill, kill!” The five men chorused as they finally acted.

Naturally, Gu Fei became serious as well and quickly eliminated one of them with a few sword slashes. Seeing one of them die before they could complete their preparations, one of the remaining four men exclaimed in shock, “F*ck! He’s the real deal!”

As these words left the person’s mouth, Gu Fei thrust his sword toward him. Following this, Gu Fei executed his Gu Family’s sword style, Zhao San Mu Si, as he chanted the words for Twin Incineration. Moonlit Nightfalls’ blade glowed fiery red as it struck the four players, insta-killing the two men through that slash with spell and disposing of the other two men through that slash with spell and another stab....

Not a tinge of suspense existed in this sequence. While an ordinary player could perhaps dodge an average Mage’s Twin Incineration, Gu Fei’s amalgamation of the spell to his spectacular swordsmanship would certainly obliterate any average player. Only death awaited anyone who would receive this particular attack of Gu Fei, so he unsurprisingly cleaned up the five men in the blink of an eye.

“You go, Drunk bro!” Fireball creepily sent this short message over.

This IGN refers to a Chinese cosplayer.

Chapter 153 - An Unprincipled Spirit

After clearing the first hill, Gu Fei quickly headed toward one of the other hiding spots of the Forever in Flowers' teams, which turned out to be a sunken piece of land by a hillside. Four men were currently glancing about from inside the pit.

"Hey!" he called out to them as he stood by the pit's edge. In the time the four men lifted their heads, Gu Fei had already leaped down and insta-killed one of them with a downward cleave. He resolved to not exchange words with these men from now on as those would only result in more questions from them.

Killing one right off the bat was indeed the right thing to do, as the remaining three men seriously pitted themselves against Gu Fei following his action. Of course, he still easily took care of this team in the end.

Meanwhile, Svelte Dancer was still chasing after Fireball and his buddies all over the forest! PvPing in this type of terrain was truly difficult for her. Not only did she have to watch her every step, she could not fully utilize her fast speed here as well. Svelte Dancer felt endlessly annoyed by all these, especially when she saw Gu Fei's score climb up to 10 kill points in the blink of an eye. Now that Gu Fei's claim of discovering over thirty enemies was proven to be true, Svelte Dancer could feel pangs of regret flowing through her. Although she wanted to hurry over to his side, she still had to take care of these few men first, right?

The six men's crude and simple traps had long been identified by the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies. They only had to watch their steps and they would not get trapped by them. However, by doing this, the ground that they could cover was severely restricted.

The five Hunters beside Fireball saw that their traps were no longer effective against the ladies, so they returned to their roots as Archers and began to employ guerilla tactic inside the forest.

They split up and fired off arrows from five different directions, leaving the ladies thoroughly confused and disoriented. They were obviously far stronger than these ladies at level 40, yet their intention to merely tease the ladies had them merrily putting their lives on the line.

“Ha ha ha! I shot one!”

“Hey, beautiful! Come catch me!”

Such arrogant shouts drifting through the forest annoyed and angered the ladies further.

Honestly speaking, there were no guarantees that the ladies could catch these five Hunters even if they were chasing after them out in the open instead of the forest. These level 40 Archers' movement speed alone was faster than them, so, besides Svelte Dancer, the ladies could only helplessly watch their steps as they pursued the men.

Fireball, who had previously been euphorically casting spells on the ladies, was feeling very lonely right now. Employing guerilla tactic to ambush the ladies was a difficult thing to do for a Mage with slow movement speed, after all. When the six separated, Fireball was the first to find himself being tailed by Svelte Dancer.

Quickly closing in on Fireball with her Fleetfoot, Svelte Dancer promptly lifted her hand to bludgeon him on the nape.

Although Bludgeon would inflict the Dizzy state to its victim, his or her awareness would actually remain intact, as what the 'Dizzy' status effect actually caused was to forcibly restrict the victim from speaking, sending messages, or other similar functions instead of really causing the victim to feel dizzy.

When Fireball was bludgeoned by Svelte Dancer, he still had the audacity to admire her fighting prowess and beauty. F*ck! This forest's lighting is really bad, was what crossed his mind at this moment of peril.

“Let’s see how you’re going to run away from me now!” Svelte Dancer was incensed! Gu Fei already had 10 kill points, yet she was still stuck at 4 kill points. Finally catching one target after so long, she absolutely did not intend to let him escape her.

What a pretty voice... With lust-filled thoughts, escaping from Svelte Dancer was of course the last thing in Fireball’s mind.

“Watch how I’m gonna f*ck you up!” Svelte Dancer continued to curse at him.

She’s feisty, too. I love it! Despite the effect of Bludgeon wearing off, Fireball was still lost in his intoxication as he continued to sleazily check Svelte Dancer out.

“What are you staring at?! Have you never seen a beauty before?!” Svelte Dancer fearlessly taunted the enemy Mage, as she believed that he would not be able to escape her at this close range. Unexpectedly, Fireball actually nodded his head in response to her exclamation. “You rascal!” Svelte Dancer cursed as she pulled out her dagger.

“Oh, great heroine, please stay your hand,” Fireball hurriedly pleaded.

“What?”

“Thousand Miles Drunk is my bro, so please spare me some dignity!” Fireball replied.

“Oh?” Stunned, Svelte Dancer prepared to send Gu Fei a message as she asked, “What’s your name?”

A babe is actually asking for my name! In his excitement, Fireball momentarily forgot an important matter as he said, “Fireball.” A ball of fire quickly ignited before him.

“Despicable!” Svelte Dancer fully assumed that Fireball was trying to surprise attack her by distracting her with his words, so she quickly went to Fireball’s back and viciously used Backstab on him.

Fireball did not manage to explain himself as he was insta-killed on the spot and got teleported out of the PvP arena via a white light. “I HATE MY NAME!” Fireball’s bellow resounded at the plaza outside the Main Hall of Guilds as he beat the ground with his fists in frustration; tears ceaselessly streamed down his cheeks.

It was at this moment that Svelte Dancer received Gu Fei’s reply: “Ah, yeah. I do have a friend from our opposing guild. His IGN is Fireball.”

“Fireball? That’s really his IGN?” Svelte Dancer asked, stunned.

“Yep! Why are you asking?” Gu Fei asked back.

“Ah... Nothing...” Svelte Dancer could only reply weakly.

“Alright. I’ll continue doing what I’m doing, then.” Gu Fei sent out this message as he yelled, “Oi!” Dashing toward several people, his sword streaked through the air and the ensuing white lights awarded Gu Fei his next batch of kill points.

The system would give off a sound every time a change in the kill points occurred. Looking at the additional five kill points to Gu Fei’s score, Svelte Dancer vexingly knocked her head against a nearby tree, “Argh... I have so much regret. Had I known, I wouldn’t have entered this forest to begin with. If I wasn’t here, I wouldn’t be tangled with these Hunters; if I’m not stuck here, I won’t be left behind point-wise. Ahhhhhh....”

“Xiaowu, what’s the matter?” Luo Luo and several other ladies happened to be passing by as she was acting like this.

“Nothing! None at all!” Svelte Dancer quickly wiped the bitter tears off her face as she ran onward once more. “Wherever the hell you all are hiding, you better get the hell out!” Her roar rang through the forest.

“Over here, beautiful!” With the voices coming from five different directions, Svelte Dancer’s remaining sanity finally broke.

Over by Gu Fei's side, his rapid takedown of three separate teams finally drew the attention of the Forever in Flowers' remaining members. The men who had been sent out of the PvP arena by Gu Fei were currently condemning him, lamenting how they did not even manage to 'trap' one 'flower' due to him. Naturally, these lecherous men could not stomach this sad result.

When Gu Fei got to the fourth team, he realized that it was unlike the other teams that only cared about searching for the ladies. The players in this team displayed readiness to take him on once they spotted him in the distance.

He felt gratified by this and eagerly dashed toward them, yet the Mages and Archers in this team did not assault Gu Fei despite him entering their attack range. Drawing nearer, Gu Fei saw a teen that resembled Royal God Call step forward and address him sagely, "Friend, you and I walk the same path of chasing skirts so why must we antagonize each other?"

Gu Fei got what this person meant and smiled wryly, "It's a big misunderstanding. I have no wish for it, either."

Someone born with a silver spoon would truly not know the desperation that true hunger could bring! All the Forever in Flowers' members, especially Sakurazaka Moony, felt very indignant on how Gu Fei just brushed off his lucky situation like it was nothing. With the mentality of avenging for his fellow guildmates, he said, "No one else butt in. I'll duel with him."

"What a great suggestion!" Gu Fei nodded his head. He did not mind whether his PvP was one on one or one versus many.

Sakurazaka Moony unhitched the bow on his back, tugged the bowstring twice, and yelled to his brothers, "Call me quickly if you see a babe." Only when all had nodded their heads in agreement that he felt at ease to face Gu Fei, "Let's begin!"

"Yeah!" Just as Gu Fei finished saying this, he stabbed forward at his opponent's direction with the sword in his hand. Sakurazaka

Moony was also a straightforward person, so he straightforwardly turned around to run without a word.

Gu Fei quickly chased after him, yet the distance between the two only lengthened as time went by. Sakurazaka Moony's speed was swift, and Svelte Dancer's speed should be somewhere around his current speed if she did not activate Fleetfoot. Archer was the job class that would benefit the most from the Agility stat, so if an Archer had a full-Agility build, he or she would not need a top-grade footwear, such as Windchaser's Boots, to reach the speed that was possessed by Svelte Dancer, the full-Agility Thief. Even the full-Agility Mage Gu Fei seemed like a second fiddle when compared to the speed that those two had.

Sakurazaka Moony ran a swathe away from Gu Fei before turning around and smiling calmly as he fired off an arrow at him. He then called out to his brothers, "Any babes yet?"

"Nope!" With this reply from all his men, Sakurazaka Moony nodded his head. Seeing that his arrow had been dodged, he merely continued to extend the distance between him and Gu Fei. He fired off an arrow on Homing Projectile as he ran onward.

Gu Fei was inwardly surprised. Truly, many unique and amazing characters existed in the online gaming world; Svelte Dancer could use her skills while on Fleetfoot, and this Sakurazaka Moony could shoot arrows while in motion. It was true that Homing Projectile had the ability to trace after its targets, but it was still necessary for the players to lock properly on their targets before that could happen. Since he could even lock on and fire off an arrow on Homing Projectile while in motion, it would naturally be easy for him to use his other skills as well.

Although Parallel World had a system that aided Archers when firing arrows, achieving this level of accuracy while they were running was not easy. At the very least, Gu Fei could not do it. Although he had been practicing kung fu for so many years, he had never once dabbled in the field of archery.

Still, Sakurazaka Moony having superb archery skill and actually managing to hit Gu Fei with his arrow were two entirely separate matters. With a raise of his sword, Gu Fei easily knocked the arrow on Homing Projectile off. Sakurazaka Moony's movement speed was indeed way faster than the average players, yet his attack speed was just slightly faster than others. No matter how superb Sakurazaka Moony's boots were, they could only increase his movement speed and could not affect his attack speed.

Sakurazaka Moony also felt surprised when he saw Gu Fei strike down his Homing Projectile. He ran a few more steps forward before turning around to release an arrow on Snipe. Gu Fei did not dare block this arrow with his sword this time, as Snipe's speed was truly fast; instead, he turned his body sideways and the arrow quickly whisked past him.

"F*ck! You can even dodge that?! Let's just stop for a while!" Sakurazaka Moony hollered and Gu Fei really halted his movement. "I am sure you realized that we can't go on like this. I can't hit you, and you can't catch up to me. The most we can do is to settle with a draw, so I don't see the point of fighting anymore. Why don't you go and play elsewhere?" With that, Sakurazaka Moony ran toward his other brothers as he yelled out, "Have the babes appeared yet?"

Gu Fei was speechless! He finally knew what it meant for a person to have an unprincipled spirit.

Chapter 154 - End of the Second Round

Sakurazaka Moony no longer bothered with Gu Fei after saying his piece and hurriedly made his way to a nearby hilltop together with his fellow brothers. They were lying down with their chests on the ground, hoping to catch sight of passing-by babes down the hill.

Fearlessly leaving their backs exposed to him, Gu Fei was at a loss on how to emotionally react to it. For a bunch of skirt chasers, aren't you guys being too straightforward and upright right now? I am your enemy, after all! Gu Fei yelled inwardly. Walking up to the men, he said, "Hey. This is a guild versus guild tournament, so —"

Sakurazaka Moony impatiently interrupted him, "Your guild is sure to win anyway since we're not fighting seriously, so why must you be so particular about things? Let me tell you; all my brothers that you killed off are currently bawling their eyes by the plaza outside the Main Hall of Guilds. You better think of an explanation!"

"Explanation? Why must I explain my action?!" Gu Fei asked indignantly, saying, "Bro, we're competing right now! It's wholly justifiable for me to slay you all!"

"Since it's a match that your guild is bound to win, why must you be so serious? It's LIFE! Just get by with what you can! Come here. Why don't you introduce me to some of your guild's babes, instead?" Sakurazaka Moony was still young, yet his warped logic sounded mature and sensible.

"I don't usually mingle with them, so I'm not really familiar..." Gu Fei trailed off as he actually did not know how to respond to the other's request.

Sakurazaka Moony looked disgusted, "Don't be a miser! You're dominating over fifty women, yet you're still not satisfied? Leave

some for us, too! Why must you be like this?”

“I really am not familiar with them!” Gu Fei finally lost his sanity just like Svelte Dancer, albeit for a different reason.

“How heartless. You’re truly unsympathetic to your fellow brothers’ plight, man!” Sakurazaka Moony said in an extremely aggrieved voice.

Gu Fei did not respond to his biased statement.

“Fine, you are ‘not familiar with them’. Still, you should know where they are right now, yeah?” Sakurazaka Moony asked.

“Oh. They are all at that forest,” Gu Fei answered as he pointed to a certain direction. Since he had no way to deal with these men, he might as well send them over to Svelte Dancer! That girl had it tough. While Gu Fei already had 14 kill points, she only managed to earn 5 kill points so far.

Sakurazaka Moony looked at where Gu Fei was pointing and was immediately aghast, “F*ck! Those b*st*rds must have lured the babes there. No wonder we didn’t even see a strand of hair of a woman here. Those louts must be thinking of keeping the babes for themselves! Comrades, let’s go. CHARGE!” With a wave of his hand, the players lying prone on the ground majestically stood up and secured their equipment to charge toward the forest.

“Thanks, bro!” Sakurazaka Moony amiably patted Gu Fei, who was smiling bitterly, on his shoulder and said, “We still have four more teams; go find them if you wanna earn some kill points!”

Gu Fei was at a loss for words! What sort of guild was this?! Did people even look up to this sort of guild leader? Unexpectedly, none of Sakurazaka Moony’s followers had any negative reaction to what he had just said.

“Brothers, let’s go chase skirts! We’ll also take care of those d*psh*ts for attempting to take all the ladies for themselves.” Sakurazaka Moony rallied his men before reminding Gu Fei,

“Don’t tell the other men where the babes are at!”

Gu Fei silently looked on as the five men rushed down the hill, thinking that he could only chase the other targets now.

At least, Sakurazura Moony was a little more upstanding than Fireball as he sent out this message on the guild channel: “Be careful of that guy from Amethyst Rebirth. He’s strong!” He had the responsibility to do this as a guild leader, after all.

The other four teams stayed in their respective formations and waited with bated breath... yet they were still swept away by Gu Fei in the end.

The PvP in the forest slowly concluded as well. The five Hunters ran all over the place but did not move to kill the ladies even once. In the end, they were rounded up by the ladies. What else was there to say about the ensuing battle? Apparently, the Hunters stood their ground firmly and defended themselves until their last HP, giving off the misconception that they were some heroic men making their final stand.

As for Sakurazaka Moony’s team that hurried over, they did not know that their ‘Hunting Babes with Trap’ method had already been busted by the ladies, so they went in and set up traps like the idiots that they were. This act of setting up traps only made the ladies know that some men were nearby and allowed them to quickly encircle the fools. Sakurazaka Moony, who was hoping that some ladies would step on his trap, saw the ladies skillfully move around it instead. By the time Sakurazaka Moony realized that something was off, he had already received an exceedingly vicious attack.

Although Sakurazaka Moony’s speed was fast, it was still not faster than Svelte Dancer on Fleetfoot. In the process of his escape, he got bludgeoned by Svelte Dancer before over fifty ladies surrounded and bombarded him with their attacks.

When Sakurazaka Moony thought back to this incident, he

described it like so: “Back then, I darted out to escape the scene. In the end, one of the Five Unyielding Experts, the beauty Svelte Dancer, caught up to me with her Fleetfoot and hit me with Bludgeon right on my temple. Over fifty ladies surrounded and attacked me together in the next moment... They were probably afraid that I would explode in anger once I recovered. Even the Priests struck me with their Holy Ball! Did anyone of you receive such a special treatment like me?”

“That’s Moony for you!” His Forever in Flowers’ members sighed in admiration.

The second round of this guild versus guild tournament ended like so. Had Forever in Flowers fought seriously with its greater number of experts, it would not have been possible for Amethyst Rebirth to win this guild match with mostly Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer’s effort. Due to the unique aspect of these two opposing guilds, Amethyst Rebirth once again attained a ‘perfect’ score. The luck for such an ending to occur was truly miraculous.

At the same time, Amethyst Rebirth’s mercenary group also successfully made it into the third round of the PvP event. Compared to the guild versus guild tournament, the mercenary PvP tournament had many small mercenary groups similar to Young Master’s Elite. Beating such groups was easy for the level 1 Amethyst mercenary group with its twenty members. As for Young Master’s Elite meeting one of the six strongest mercenary groups in the second round, it could only be said that the group had the worst of all possible bad lucks.

Although they managed to eke out a win, the impact of their action was huge.

With no way to vent the frustration for their loss, the Cloud Herder’s players could only condemn Young Master’s Elite’s members in speech inside the game and in writing on the forums by calling their tactic shameless and a blight to the entire event of Parallel World.

This was considered as the most controversial occurrence in the two rounds of the mercenary PvP tournament, attracting even the players from other cities to visit this post.

In this post, Cloud Herder detailed how Young Master's Elite had made a few strong members act as suicide bombers to take down a greater number of opponents first before making its final member with fast movement speed run around the map to waste the allocated PvP time.

All the mercenary groups participating in the PvP tournament were naturally aware of this rule, yet they did not expect that a six-man mercenary group would actually win over the ranked sixth Cloud Herder mercenary group through it. Other mercenary groups that had the same size as Cloud Herder suddenly felt threatened, as getting beaten through such a roundabout and unscrupulous method was indeed very frustrating.

Young Master's Elite was obviously privy to this talk on the forums. Even Gu Fei checked the post after hearing all the hubbubs about it.

Over at Ray's Bar, some members of Young Master's Elite were currently reluctant to talk with Young Master Han and opted to giving him a cold shoulder with a sullen look on their faces.

If this tactic was forced on them to achieve victory due to the helplessness of the situation, these experts would not feel bad about other people berating them and might even feel proud of their method. However, Young Master's Elite could do more than just that. With Young Master Han's prodigious mind, Gu Fei's extraordinary fighting prowess, and the other experts' abilities, they could easily wipe the floor with Cloud Herder mercenary group. Only the experts of Young Master's Elite knew of this fact, however. Thus, their resentment to Young Master Han over this tactic that required sacrificing some members could not be measured by mere words.

The current atmosphere in the room was stifling. Young Master Han silently drank his liquor as Brother Assist introduced today's opponent. Young Master's Elite's luck was back to normal this third round after the last round's misfortune as it was matched up against a five-man mercenary group.

"Hmm... For today's match, I think that we should just kill one of them and maintain our formation. They shouldn't be able to do anything to us. We will easily win by dragging this match till the end just like that," Royal God Call proposed sardonically.

Everyone looked at Young Master Han. After yesterday's match, all left to do their personal businesses or participate in the guild versus guild tournament. Quite some time had passed since then, yet Young Master Han was still not saying a word about the matter.

Young Master Han drained the last bit of liquor from his glass before speaking, "Mhm. The method Royal proposed sounds viable, so let's go with that."

The room descended into an uncomfortable silence.

"Alright. Stop this childish bickering and get serious, everyone," Brother Assist laughed bitterly. Royal God Call's immaturity was expected with his age, but the smart Young Master Han actually engaging him into a verbal fight was simply outrageous!

After Brother Assist brokered a stalemate between the two, Young Master Han finally adjusted his attitude accordingly, "Yesterday's match ending purposely like so is to give the large mercenary groups a wake-up call. I admit that we could easily annihilate the entire mercenary group yesterday, but one of the crucial requirements for that was for me to carry out my commands from a high ground. However, commanding from a high ground will expose me to the enemies. Thankfully, yesterday's PvP arena had good concealment and exploitable vantage point. Many conditions have to be fulfilled when using a

tactic that relies on high-ground commanding, and it is still not guaranteed to work all the time. Thus, I used the opportunity we were given yesterday to achieve such a victory to set something in motion for the upcoming matches with the other large mercenary groups. Even the criticisms we are currently receiving on the forums are exactly what I want. As for what use those will bring, you'll find out the next time we meet a large mercenary group.”

Chapter 155 - Process and Result

A certain level of intelligence was necessary for anyone to become part of a generation of experts in an online game. In the fast ever-changing world of online games, many people would move to a new game every three to five months, so going down the path of [Guo Jing](#) would never work if someone wanted to make a name for himself or herself in the online gaming community.

The gaming experts currently seated in one of the private rooms at Ray's Bar bagged numerous achievements in the many MMOs that they had played. Although they might not be heaven-sent geniuses, they were at least very experienced and quick-witted. Therefore, Young Master Han did not need to elaborate further after giving his straightforward speech.

If sacrificing themselves could secure their mercenary group's victory in the long run, these experts would of course be more than willing to comply with Young Master Han's instructions. Although they were still resentful about being kept in the dark and being sent out like lambs to the slaughter, Young Master Han's actions actually went in line with his personality. Now, they could only content themselves with cursing at him inwardly and move on from this matter. They even refrained themselves from saying pointless stuff like "never again" to him, as they knew that it would truly be 'pointless'. After all, Young Master Han's actions were governed by his 'great' personality and this narcissist would certainly never accept anyone's advice about reforming his 'awesome' personality.

The atmosphere in the room was still far from regaining its usual sense of friendliness, but the current ambiance would do. At the very least, this six-man mercenary group was no longer on the verge of breaking apart. For them, dying once was not actually that big of a deal in a game, but it was especially hurtful to their pride as experts! Brother Assist was just a 'pseudo expert', so his pride

was not as intense as Royal God Call and War Without Wounds'. Despite the two being utterly deplorable when in front of beautiful women, they seriously valued their reputation as pros. The two felt somewhat better after hearing Young Master Han's explanation and it might even be possible to remove the last splinter in their hearts if a sycophant were to praise them right now for their noble sacrifice at yesterday's PvP match.

Such a person unfortunately did not exist in this six-man mercenary group, so everyone stared blankly at one another for a while. Recovering himself first, Royal God Call promptly stood up, "I'm gonna restock my arrows. I'll meet you guys in the 'changing room'!"

"I'll go repair my equipment," War Without Wounds said as he stood up as well.

Restocking on arrows and repairing equipment were pretexts that these two would often give to excuse themselves from the room, so no one was surprised.

"I'll go walk around for a bit," Brother Assist said as he also stood up. Reaching the curtain door, he casually called out to Gu Fei who had been staying motionless for a while now, "Let's go, Miles!"

Gu Fei jolted awake and sat upright, "Ah! Is the meeting over?"

Everyone suddenly felt irked. In a meeting where the life and death of their mercenary group was on tenterhooks, this person actually had the nerve to sleep. He was being far too easy-going!

"It's over," Young Master Han replied faintly.

"Oh. Then, I'm off to buy two catties of fruits." This was Gu Fei's excuse for leaving every time.

Leaving Ray's Bar together, Brother Assist asked Gu Fei, "Buying fruits?"

Gu Fei flashed him a grin, as his dimensional pocket already had plenty of fruits. Brother Assist returned his smile. Since neither

knew where to go, they ended up walking around aimlessly.

“Do you also mind Young Master’s method?” Brother Assist finally broached this topic after a period of hesitation.

Gu Fei smiled and replied, “Although he sacrificed you all for his scheme, he did nothing untoward to me!”

“That reason... It’s too superficial!” Brother Assist sighed.

“I’m just joking,” Gu Fei laughingly said. He then asked in return, “How about you? What do you think of it?”

“If our mercenary group were a large one, his method would be hard to accept. Since we are just a small mercenary group made up of a handful of friends, it should not be that big a deal,” Brother Assist offered.

“Mhm!” Gu Fei nodded his head, saying, “I think so, too.”

“How sly of you to copy my opinion! Just what do you really think?” Brother Assist probed.

Gu Fei gave a serious reply this time, “I was angry at first, but this is just a game in the end. Based on the PvP tournament’s rules, dying won’t affect us much. If we can truly win, I reckon it won’t matter what method we use.”

“Hmm... You’ve got a point,” Brother Assist, “Does this mean that you don’t mind Young Master’s method at all?”

“I mind. In fact, I am extremely bothered by it!” Gu Fei admitted with a crestfallen look on his face, adding, “We should just kill our opponents every match. That’s far more enjoyable.”

“But how far can we go using that method with only us, six men?” Brother Assist asked.

“Why even care about that?! As long as we enjoy the fights, any result is fine,” Gu Fei firmly replied with clenched fists.

Brother Assist stayed quiet for quite a while before finally saying with a sigh, “You’re such a PvP fanatic that we’re barely on the

same wavelength.”

Gu Fei only smiled at his comment, as his perspective about this matter was indeed very different from Brother Assist and the rest's. Between process and result, most players would value the result more. As long as they could obtain a satisfactory result, they would not care about the process at all. A slight dispute might happen along the way, but it would truly not matter as long as the end goal was achieved.

There were of course some players who claimed to value the process more, but the majority of them were the kind that would spout phrases like “Gaming is about having fun” or “Play the game instead of being played by the game.” These players were usually mediocre players who simply wanted to act high and mighty in front of those who valued the result more with their ‘holier than thou attitude’. Besides these hypocrites, meeting someone like Gu Fei who truly and strongly subscribed to this mentality was rare.

Gu Fei merely wanted to PvP, so the result and process were the same to him. As for the ‘result’ that the other players valued, it often meant experience, items, or similar rewards that Gu Fei cared the least.

No more words were exchanged between Gu Fei and Brother Assist after that, and the two went their separate ways eventually. Thus, all the members of Young Master's Elite wasted their time singly before making their way to the teleportation array and into the ‘changing room’ when their next match was about to begin.

Since the opposing mercenary group only had five members, this group of experts did not bother discussing about any sort of tactics beforehand and decided on the spot to take the enemies head on. Hence, everyone only focused on emphasizing to Gu Fei that he must limit his exposure. “Don't use AOE spells or fight against two targets. There are only five opponents this time, so you are forbidden to fight more than one,” Royal God Call and the rest repeatedly reminded Gu Fei.

“I already said that you guys did not need to show up for this match!” Gu Fei could only say this in his frustration.

“No way!” everyone collectively said. So far, only Gu Fei and Young Master Han participated in the first match and all but Gu Fei were used as cannon fodders in the second match. No matter how much they valued the result, the process should not be entirely boring either. It was unknown if they had discussed ganging up on Gu Fei for this matter beforehand but everyone insisted: “One each! Four of us will take care of one opponent each while Brother Assist and Young Master will take care of the last one.”

“Fine!” Gu Fei reluctantly acquiesced.

Something unexpected happened, though; only three out of the five members of the opposing mercenary group had shown up for the match.

“How should we split them up?” Brother Assist asked.

Gu Fei, Royal God Call, and Sword Demon exchanged smiles before saying, “It’s first come, first served basis.”

“Screw this!” War Without Wounds roared in annoyance. Doing that would clearly become a contest of speed and, as a Warrior, he would never have a chance against these three speed freaks.

As for Brother Assist and Young Master Han, they were not really disappointed to not participate in this match with them having non-combat job classes.

As the timer turned zero, everyone was teleported straight into the PvP arena. Only nine players were participating in this match, so they got the map for ten individuals and below. Once they spawned into the map, the six immediately spotted their three opponents.

“Charge!” Royal God Call shouted with utmost confidence. Although he had traded his Windchaser’s Boots to Svelte Dancer,

the pair he got from her, Boots of the Nimble Cloud, was merely ‘movement +2’ off. Moreover, Royal God Call had the Archer job class that benefited the most from the Agility stat, so his speed was currently on par with Gu Fei despite not going for an all-Agility build.

With that shout of his, Gu Fei and Sword Demon dashed forward. Royal God Call was about to make his move too when his feet were lifted off the ground. Looking backward, he saw that War Without Wounds had picked him up. “What are you doing?!” Royal God Call asked, dumbfounded.

“Since I can’t snatch one, I’m just going to drag someone with me,” War Without Wounds flashed him a devious smile.

“F*ck! Why must it be me?!” Royal God Call flailed about in his attempt to wriggle his way out of War Without Wounds’ vice grip. Sadly, even if he managed to hit War Without Wounds with his arms flailing around up there, he could only inflict a limited amount of damage to the Warrior.

War Without Wounds swung Royal God Call about for a bit to disorient him before answering with a question, “Do you think I would rather grab Miles? Do I look suicidal to you?”

“Sword Demon! There’s still him!” Royal God Call moaned feebly.

“It’s too late now,” War Without Wounds used his free hand to point afar, “Look. They’re already upon them.”

War Without Wounds placed Royal God Call back to the ground yet maintained his hands on the latter’s shoulders. A taller middle-aged man and a smaller young boy stood on an elevated piece of land and watched Gu Fei and Sword Demon flurry their weapons toward the three opponents. Royal God Call could feel tears streaking down his cheeks.

No tension could be felt from this scene. To repay Sword Demon

sacrificing himself for him yesterday, Gu Fei gave up his kill to Sword Demon. Young Master's Elite mercenary group easily breezed through the third round with this win.

The guild versus guild tournament was up next. Gu Fei's interest in the guild matches had long surpassed his interest in the mercenary PvP matches for several reasons. First, he could fight more opponents in the guild matches. Second, Amethyst Rebirth never had any battle strategy, which pretty much gave Gu Fei free reign to rampage across the PvP arena and kill whenever he wanted. This was what Gu Fei had been looking forward to all this while, albeit he had yet to kill an opponent that could put up a fight—well, maybe Sakurazuka Moony could count as one in a way. However, the two would never be able to best each other and would only end up in a stalemate given their respective fortes, so Sakurazuka Moony technically did not count as one of Gu Fei's PvP conquests in this guild versus guild tournament.

The third round of the mercenary PvP tournament ended way too fast and too early, so Gu Fei decided to pick up 'Bounty Mission' to pass the time. When it was time for the guild versus guild tournament, he hurried over to the teleportation array by the Main Hall of Guilds.

When he entered the 'changing room', he saw that all the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies had a somber expression on their faces once more. Could they have met another scabrous guild? As Gu Fei was thinking of this, July started introducing today's opposing guild when she saw that everyone had arrived.

Amethyst Rebirth had finally drawn a big lot, as it was currently up against Yunduan City's number two guild, Carouse.

Guo Jing - is the main character in the Legend of the Condor Heroes, which is part of the Condors Trilogy. What the author essentially means in this is that no one in the online gaming world can become renowned by being loyal to just one game.

Chapter 156 - Single File Formation

Although Carouse was known as Yunduan City's second largest guild, its size and level were the same as Traversing Four Seas. Both guilds were at level 5 with seven hundred fifty members. Frankly speaking, the only worry that large guilds in Parallel World had was if the guild level was not high enough. As for the member count, many players would immediately fill up the available spots once the guild level rose. People were dying to join such large guilds at the first opportunity, after all.

Carouse was viewed as the second largest guild in Yunduan City only because it started slower than Traversing Four Seas and was always a few steps behind the latter at leveling up the guild, leaving Carouse at an unfavorable position whenever it was time to level the guild and recruit new members.

However, ranking the guilds was not just simply a race to being higher level. The day-to-day tasks and happenings in the guild were important as well. A large guild would not simply let its members waste away their spots as days went by, so replacing members was a common occurrence in a guild. Players that seldom logged on or were leveling too slowly to meet the guild's demands would be kicked out, and the freed spots would naturally be used to inject new blood to further strengthen the guild.

This race to recruit capable experts was the main contest of struggle between the two guilds. Although Traversing Four Seas and Carouse were ranked as first and second based on the time they each leveled, the public was still unsure which of them was stronger and had better experts since the two guilds had never clashed before. Thus, a majority of the players were hoping that the guild versus guild tournament would determine for everyone which was the better guild between the two.

Since Amethyst Rebirth, a small guild with fifty-four players, had drawn such a formidable opponent, the specter of death was

visible even on the ladies' very expressions. Although they were not heavily invested to the match's outcome, they still had some regards toward it. The small flicker of hope inside each of them wished for a miracle to happen. They managed to breeze through their two matches easily thus far, so they naturally felt a little sad to finally encounter a huge hurdle today. This was more or less what the ladies currently had in mind.

Concluding her presentation, July merely said, "Everyone, do your best."

All the ladies and the sole gentleman nodded their heads. Gu Fei chose to remain silent, as Svelte Dancer approached him and said, "Plenty of kill points out there today, so I won't lose to you for sure."

Gu Fei laughed bitterly for a moment, "I'm afraid this might be our last chance to compete for kill points, so you better try your darndest."

Svelte Dancer bewilderedly asked, "Why did you say that?"

"You actually think that we've got a chance to win today?" Gu Fei asked back instead, astonished.

"Why not?" Svelte Dancer felt shocked at his question, asking, "Haven't you seen the forums?"

Gu Fei was confused by her question, saying, "Forums? I've skimmed through them. Why?"

"There is this six-man mercenary group called Young Master's Elite that defeated Cloud Herder mercenary group with over seventy members. Don't you know of this matter?!" Svelte Dancer gasped in surprise.

"Of course, I know about it," Gu Fei replied hastily.

Everyone had already been drawn in by Svelte Dancer's gasp. Young Master's Elite might not be very famous, but that name held plenty of weight to Amethyst Rebirth's older members. The ladies

knew that that mercenary group had helped them resolve the matter with No Smile, so they were happy that Young Master's Elite had made the headlines. Hearing Svelte Dancer suddenly mention this mercenary group, they eagerly pricked their ears to eavesdrop.

Svelte Dancer cleared her throat and swept her gaze over at everyone present, "Ladies!"

"Ahem!" Gu Fei coughed lightly.

Svelte Dancer casted a sideways glance at him before adding, "And someone."

Gu Fei did not cough anymore, as being 'someone' was better than being labeled as one of the 'ladies'.

Svelte Dancer continued to address the crowd, "Young Master's Elite is a good example for us. The players in that group did not falter despite encountering strong enemies and instead tried their best to drag the fight out with their opponents. We are in a similar predicament to Young Master's Elite in today's fight, so we must actively learn from that group's tenacity. Keep running if you can and drag as many enemies down if you cannot; do your best to cause an upheaval and sacrifice every bit of your strength for our guild to win this match."

Svelte Dancer's speech had an extremely rousing effect to the crowd. One after another, these ladies showed in their expressions how her speech had cleared the heavy mood permeating the air and had given them hope for victory. These ladies solemnly promised to put their all into this match.

The meeting ended in a positive note, and everyone was subsequently teleported into the PvP arena when the countdown was over. Svelte Dancer whirled her dagger in the air and yelled out a battlecry before sprinting out of sight in a cloud of dust. The other ladies followed suit by waving their weapons about, shouting battlecries, and proceeding to run toward the rolling hills and vast

plains before them.

Gu Fei was once more at the end of the group and by himself. He felt like puking blood. When it came to matters of personalities, some things never changed and they were hardly worth talking about. They had no chance of winning this match at this rate, unless Svelte Dancer miraculously acquired the indestructible bodies of the five Saint Seiyas when they donned their golden zodiac clothes.

Gu Fei did not hurry to join in on the charge forward and casually went up a small knoll to survey the map's terrain, noting that their effort might still come to naught even if they had Young Master Han's expert guidance.

About seven hundred players were in this match between Carouse and Amethyst Rebirth, so this PvP arena was far larger than the ones Gu Fei had previously been into before. Getting into a vantage point and looking about, he merely saw more land stretching beyond the reach of his sight. How would anyone do any sort of high-ground commanding at this rate? It was exactly as what Young Master Han had said before: There were limitations to commanding from a vantage point.

Gu Fei descended from atop the knoll and bounded across the land. The size of the map and the time limit for the PvP match were truly complementary to the quantity of the participating players. With such a big map, we might eke out a victory if I kill every opponent I encounter, Gu Fei thought to himself. He gave up the idea of engaging the enemies head on to avoid alerting the opposing guild's main force of his presence. Gu Fei walked along the edge of the map, hoping to first observe the enemy guild's composition before making any further plans.

The guild channel was surprisingly 'quiet' when he pulled it out. The ladies' desire to win this guild match was apparently pretty high for them to prioritize the fight at hand over chatting. However, focusing on a task did not mean that it would get

accomplished brilliantly. In this case, the ladies' lack of strength was still the prevailing truth.

Gu Fei continued to run forward. The guild channel was 'quiet' and the PvP arena was deserted. As Gu Fei was thinking that he might have entered an entirely different dimension, a message suddenly flashed on the guild channel from Svelte Dancer: "F*ck me!"

Gu Fei's heart skipped a beat. Svelte Dancer's high Attack Power and fast speed made her combat strength comparable to his, so having her around would somewhat increase their guild's chance of victory. Could it be that she had been eliminated so soon?

Thankfully, the system did not send out any signal for a death and Svelte Dancer immediately followed-up her message: "These guys are far too comical."

"What happened?" A rush of queries appeared on the guild channel.

"Have a look for yourself," Svelte Dancer replied cryptically.

With her monstrously fast speed, Svelte Dancer's mad dash to the front allowed her to see something that the others would only see after quite some time. Gu Fei was considered as the second fastest member in the guild, but he wasted quite a few precious minutes due to him walking to the edge of the map and climbing up a high hill. At this moment, not one person was visible in his line of sight.

Quickly making his way forward, he finally spotted human figures ahead and could not help but spit out, "F*ck me!"

At the very boundary of his sight, the members of Carouse had lined themselves up in one row. They were only a few meters apart from one another as they marched forward. Undoubtedly, this single row formation that Carouse had adopted with its nearly seven hundred participating members would cover the map from end to end. Marching in this manner to the opposite side of the

map was equivalent to the guild thoroughly searching the entire PvP arena and not allowing one person to escape their sight. Truly, having plenty of people has many advantages! Gu Fei sighed to himself.

Still, this search formation might prevent any enemies from staying hidden, but it was clearly vulnerable to attacks. Just as he was thinking of this, July sent out a command on the guild channel, wanting everyone to gather in one place. It seemed that she was planning to harness Amethyst Rebirth's full power to pierce through this formation.

The ladies' speed varied, but gathering them did not require much time as they had been traveling toward the same direction. Gu Fei was currently on the opposite side of the ladies' rendezvous point, so he was the last to reach their location despite his fast speed. Moreover, the fighting of the two guilds had already started without him.

Gu Fei ran up a nearby hill and took a look at the fighting of the two guilds below.

Since both guilds were clashing in just a specific area of the PvP arena, it actually seemed like Amethyst Rebirth had the superiority in numbers when all the ladies were charging toward a few enemies who were lining up in this single file formation. The players of Carouse were definitely inferior in terms of number in this skirmish, but their job class composition and fighting power were extremely balanced. Instead of fighting the ladies to the death, they chose to maintain their formation and defend against their assault. In contrast, the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies' lack of a good commander and group battle experience became more and more evident as the PvPing dragged on. For instance, the ladies' battle positions were a mess.

Given that players had no immunity from friendly fire in Parallel World, the players' stationary and mobile battle positions were often stressed upon. Right now, Amethyst Rebirth's assault was

akin to scattered sand battering a large rock: The Archers had their firing range blocked by their guildmates, the Mages could not unleash AOE spells due to how tightly packed they were, the Warriors that usually acted as vanguards of a battle formation to tank their enemies' attacks were instead at the rear, and the Thieves that should be on Stealth and flitting in and out of the fight to deal bursts of damage to the opponents were instead at the frontline.

Carouse's team steadily retreated to further upset the Amethyst Rebirth's already fragmented battle formation as more members from either side of the single row formation began to stream in. At this rate, these ladies would not attain any sort of victory! It seemed that Carouse had a thorough understanding of Amethyst Rebirth's flaws, which was why they had intentionally shown a weakness in their formation to bait the ladies into assaulting them.

Since the ladies thought that their battle formation's weakness was insignificant, then it meant that Carouse's ploy was a success.

Gu Fei could no longer bear to watch this, so he sprinted down the hill and hollered, "Retreat! Leave them all to me!"

None of the ladies was commanding, so they happily and obediently retreated to the side when they heard Gu Fei's shout. As Gu Fei raised his Moonlit Nightfalls and chanted a spell, the opponents timely fired off arrows toward him to disrupt his spell-casting. At the same time, he heard a familiar yet aloof voice: "Use AOE spells and [zone](#) that twerp."

In games, zoning is a term used when someone is keeping a target out of an area or away from another player/goal.

Chapter 157 - Gallantry and Tactics

Just as a row of Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno sprouted before Gu Fei, a series of Descending Wheel of Flames ignited in the sky. Looking beyond the wall of fire separating him and the opposing guild, Gu Fei saw that a familiar-looking Priest was currently leisurely bestowing Heal on the nearby Carouse's players. When this Priest saw that Gu Fei had spotted him, he performed a curt bow toward him with a flourish of his left hand.

"Thieves, no need to enter Stealth. Archers, don't fire arrows together; instead, keep a steady stream of arrows coming to pester him. Mages, continue what you're doing," Young Master Han threw Gu Fei a smile as he issued these instructions to the members of Carouse. Since the ladies had all retreated at Gu Fei's behest, the opposing players were able to focus their firepower on him.

The ladies who were now standing at a safe distance looked on to see what Gu Fei meant by his "leave them to me" declaration, yet they merely saw him getting zoned to the side by the opponents.

"Fireball! Shoot!" Gu Fei could only cast this most basic spell under the enemies' intense suppression.

The damage that his Fireball spell could cause was shocking, but because of its extremely weak Verdict, the enemy Warrior was able to cleave the ball of fire with his sword as if it was nothing.

Gu Fei dealt with all the incoming arrows as he waited for the wall of AOE spells to dissipate. Given that the average Mages had much higher mana pool than Gu Fei, these Mages before him were unlikely to run out of mana after casting just four or five AOE spells. While Gu Fei was being zoned in a corner, the men from both ends of Carouse's single file formation stealthily made their way toward the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies. Standing atop the hill, Gu Fei saw that a number of opponents were in the process of

encircling Amethyst Rebirth to annihilate everyone in one go.

At this moment when advancing or retreating was not possible, Gu Fei actually received a message from Young Master Han: “Compared to your gallantry, tactic is certainly more useful!”

He is really sadistic! Gu Fei spitefully thought to himself. Despite the steadily increasing number of opponents, Carouse continued to deal with Gu Fei by zoning him and did not dare engage him in a melee.

The enemies that were not dealing with Gu Fei moved to assault the ladies, and although the ladies retaliated at the incoming enemies, they would still occasionally look at Gu Fei’s direction, hoping that he would do his “leave them to me” declaration again.

With the situation becoming worse as time dragged on, Gu Fei knew that it was only a matter of time before the ladies were decimated. If that happened, he would have to deal with a seven-hundred-man encirclement by himself. No matter how much Gu Fei loved PvPing, he still did not wish to deal with such an insane situation.

Looking around and spotting a sizeable boulder at his rear, Gu Fei sprinted toward the rock and hid behind it. As the Archers grew nervous at the realization that the boulder would shield Gu Fei from their arrows, Young Master Han merely smiled, “Don’t worry about that. Any spell he chants over there won’t hit us. That boulder has long been included in my calculations.”

The Mages of Carouse paused for a bit as they realized that the range of their spells, be it their Descending Wheel of Flames or Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno, would indeed not be able to reach that rock. Meaning, Gu Fei’s attack would not be able to reach them as well.

As the men of Carouse thought up to this, they spotted Gu Fei peeking from behind the boulder. A raging inferno sprouted before them in the next moment, yet it was a good two meters away from

their nearest player. All of them laughed heartily at this and praised Young Master Han's brilliant calculations.

It was at this moment that Gu Fei had dashed recklessly out of the rock and into the wall of fire zoning him.

"Is he surrendering to his desires? That's suicidal!" Young Master Han laughed coldly. Gu Fei had dived head-first into the burning conflagration and was instantly lost in the flames. The time he had to spend within the flames was but a moment with his fast speed, yet he had no means to withstand the damage output of several Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno and Descending Wheel of Flames.

Young Master Han and the rest of Carouse thought that they would not see Gu Fei in this PvP arena again, yet the sight of Gu Fei making it through the wall of fire with soot streaks and burned marks on his body gave them a thorough shock.

"How is that possible?!" The Mages whose spells had formed the wall of fire separating Gu Fei from them involuntarily stopped their spell-casting as they gawked at one another.

When the bombardment stopped, only the scorched ground, a few raging infernos, and one flame wheel were left on the PvP field.

"Whose flame wheel is that? Why haven't you made it descend yet?" These players indeed lived up to their reputation as experts of a large guild as they very quickly found the reason for the anomaly, questioningly eyeing the few Mages in charge of zoning Gu Fei.

As the Mages suspiciously looked at one another, Gu Fei suddenly laughed, "Do you mean that flame wheel? Sorry about that... That's actually mine." With Gu Fei uttering the word "descend", the flame wheel finally explosively landed on the ground.

"You..." Everyone finally realized what had happened, "That's

too sneaky!”

“You’re not just a musclehead, after all!” Young Master Han could not help but praise Gu Fei’s ingenuity.

That one flame wheel Gu Fei had casted effectively disrupted the Mages’ chain of spells. The thing was that the coordination of these Mages who were casting Descending Wheel of Flames was actually flawless, as they would all take turns casting that spell, and each of them would only cast the next flame wheel after the previous one had descended. Gu Fei’s Descending Wheel of Flames had deceptively stayed suspended mid-air amid the enemies’ casted spells, giving the Mages the wrong idea that one of them had yet to drop the casted flame wheel on the ground, and thus buying enough time for Gu Fei to safely breakthrough their spell cordon that was only made up of several Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno.

This foolhardy method only worked because the Mages of Carouse had been coordinating with one another so expertly. Had they been the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies, they would surely have unleashed spells on the targets at their convenience without a care about coordinating their attacks with others.

The originally excellent coordinated attacks of the enemies were thus exploited by Gu Fei.

“Quickly attack!” Coming back to reality, the players of Carouse realized that Gu Fei was already upon them and quickly organized themselves for a frontal assault.

“Too late!” Gu Fei said as he closed in on his most hated enemies, the Mages. Before the Mages could raise their magic staves to cast spells, Gu Fei’s Twin Incineration had already insta-killed a full circle of them.

“F*ck! What kind of Mage is he?!” The remaining players were dumbfounded. The Archers had originally assumed that Gu Fei would cast a spell to attack them, so they had readied their arrows

to interrupt his incantation. Who would have thought that Gu Fei would instead dart toward them while dodging the incoming attacks to insta-kill the Mages with his Twin Incineration?

“His Spell Damage alone is already monstrous!” Everyone finally realized why Young Master Han had treated this Mage so specially and tried to prevent him from getting near them or completing his spell-casting. Truly, the Spell Damage he had just displayed was too shocking.

Several Archers split up and ran as they fired off arrows on Homing Projectile at Gu Fei.

Although Gu Fei did not fear this archer skill, the need to knock the arrows on Homing Projectile singly still made him feel very annoyed as it somewhat disrupted his fighting tempo. While Gu Fei weaved his sword to deal with the arrows on Homing Projectile, several opposing melee job classes were moving onward to surround him.

Gu Fei had casted one Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno and one Descending Wheel of Flames just now before he managed to blitz through the enemies' ranks. Moreover, that Twin Incineration he had used to cut down several Mages almost depleted him of his low mana. He had yet to eat any fruit to recover his mana as well, so insta-killing these players that were moving to surround him was not possible.

Young Master Han seemed to also be aware of Gu Fei's dilemma as he sniggered over by one side.

Turning his head in the direction of the laugh, Gu Fei impatiently bellowed, “What are you looking at me for?! Get rid of that Priest already!”

The enemies followed his gaze, yet all they saw was air. They returned their gazes to Gu Fei and regarded him oddly, thinking, Has this guy finally lost his marbles?

However, a figure unexpectedly faded into view from that empty space in the next instant. When this figure completely materialized, it was already within two meters of Young Master Han.

Svelte Dancer.

When Gu Fei broke through the enemies' zoning, he noticed that a Thief on Stealth had detached itself from the ladies' side. Gu Fei should have no idea who this Thief on Stealth was without the person revealing himself or herself, yet the person's fast speed allowed him to guess the Thief's identity right away, as no one could move so quickly while on Stealth besides Svelte Dancer.

The Priest Young Master Han without an Endurance build currently did not have anyone near him. With Svelte Dancer's monstrously fast speed and high Attack Power, he might not even have time to bestow Heal on himself.

Relieved, Gu Fei returned Young Master Han's snigger. Unexpectedly, Young Master Han merely flashed Gu Fei a cold smile. Before that smile faded away, Gu Fei had already heard Svelte Dancer's annoyed cry: "Ahhh! Why would there be a Hunting Trap here?!"

The Archers that had previously shot nothing but air due to Svelte Dancer's extremely fast speed immediately made the necessary adjustments. These Archers were confident that they could hit a stationary target, so they unhurriedly made their shots.

"How troublesome!" Gu Fei said as he used his last bit of mana to carve out a portion of his encirclement and dart toward Svelte Dancer.

Gu Fei arrived to where Svelte Dancer was, and the arrows were close to hitting her as well. So he immediately bent over and swept his leg at her heels, causing Svelte Dancer to screamingly topple to the front and into his waiting back, successfully evading all the arrows heading her way at the same time.

“F*ck! Why does it seems like the new one is always heavier than the last one when I am carrying girls?!”

Heavy, fat, plump, ugly, old... were usually taboo descriptions for any women, yet the emulous Svelte Dancer did not react negatively to Gu Fei’s crass comment and instead guiltily answered, “I’m sorry! I have lots of stuff in my dimensional pocket.”

“Throw them away! Quickly throw them away!” By the time he said this, Gu Fei had already straightened his back while running away unsteadily with Svelte Dancer on his back. He felt as if he would cough up blood at any given moment due to her heavy weight.

Gu Fei had of course no wish to PvP while Svelte Dancer was on his back, so he decided to run away with her for now. He was only helping her move since she had no means to do so herself. She would return to normal without receiving damage once the Hunting Trap’s effect wore off, anyway. This was what he had learned from the Forever in Flowers’ ‘Hunting Babes with Trap’ method.

As for when exactly the trap’s effect would wear off... Gu Fei lowered his head to check, and he noticed that the trap was still clamping down on Svelte Dancer’s leg!

“Oh!” Hearing Gu Fei’s exhortation, Svelte Dancer promptly tossed out some items from her dimensional pocket.

Gu Fei indeed felt the weight pressing on his body lessening and his steps becoming lighter the more items Svelte Dancer threw out. He looked backward and saw that the enemies were closing in on them fast, yet the trap was still hugging Svelte Dancer’s leg.

“Don’t bother about me! Run!” Svelte Dancer resolutely made a decision.

“How could he?!” Someone actually answered for Gu Fei, saying, “He wants to prove that companions are important.”

He looked backward once more and saw that Young Master Han was staring at him with mocking eyes.

Gu Fei gave out a light laugh, “I’m not trying to prove anything! It’s just instinctive sometimes.”

Although Svelte Dancer had thrown out many items, Gu Fei was still heavily encumbered. This meant that his speed had barely increased, so the enemies very easily caught up to them.

The enemies catching up to him was not really a problem despite his depleted mana, but since the immobile Svelte Dancer was with him right now... Gu Fei could only sigh.

Surprisingly, the enemies who initially had their eyes fixed on the two were now gazing even more intently on the ground. “These items...” everyone mumbled.

Gu Fei glanced around them. The many items Svelte Dancer had thrown on the ground were glistening with radiance. He had a sudden realization, I’m carrying the world’s mightiest pay-to-win player. The items she carries around are of course not just mere trinkets. Although not just anyone could equip these items, they were still worth a lot of money.

How many people would actually be unmoved by such a shower of valuable freebies? These players of Carouse clearly did not wish to reject them, but... Pick them up? But what if the others scorn me for doing so... Refrain myself from picking them up? But what if the others pick them up for themselves? Such thoughts were fermenting on their minds right now.

How long does a Hunting Trap last? As Gu Fei was pondering on this and the enemies were hesitating about picking up the items on the ground, the Hunting Trap on Svelte Dancer had finally worn off.

“I’m fine now!” Svelte Dancer whispered.

“Go finish them!” Gu Fei and Young Master Han actually said the

same thing at the same time.

Svelte Dancer nodded her head confidently as she hopped to the ground, “What about you?”

“Let me eat a banana first,” Gu Fei replied.

“F*ck! This again...” Svelte Dancer muttered as she zipped off.

Chapter 158 - Arctic Whirlwind

The mighty Svelte Dancer could finally flaunt her magnificence again. Actually, Svelte Dancer was mightier than Gu Fei when it came to melee as he could deal monstrous damage to the enemies with his Twin Incineration for four times at most due to his low amount of mana. Although Moonlit Nightfalls' physical damage was also also frighteningly high, Gu Fei could only tap a limited amount of it due to his character's insufficient Sword Aptitude. In short, Gu Fei was someone who could start off strongly but would become irrelevant after a few moves.

Svelte Dancer was different. Her normal attacks could insta-kill low HP job classes, so Gu Fei seriously suspected that her dagger was a higher level weapon as well. She must be geared with top-grade equipment that boosted Dagger Aptitude, as the dagger's sheen that made her hand nearly indistinguishable was far denser than his Moonlit Nightfalls' purplish luster.

Right now, Gu Fei was watching Svelte Dancer's performance while eating a banana. She had already used Fleetfoot during her failed attempt to assault Young Master Han moments ago, so she was currently unable to display her trademark fighting style due to the skill's cool-down time. Nevertheless, her normal running speed was already enough to make others break out in cold sweats.

No one could keep up with Svelte Dancer's speed. In fact, many of them could only catch sight of her when she was already before their eyes or positioned behind them.

This was no longer a matter of equipment or stats but rather the players' inherent reaction time. Those who had inherently slow reaction time would not be able to follow or match the fast players' movement even if they had the best equipment.

Svelte Dancer's forward maneuver instantly took down three players. Gu Fei's banana was almost eaten up and he was now only

waiting for his mana to fully get replenished.

The members of Carouse currently facing Svelte Dancer felt helpless against her indomitable strength and fast speed, so they decided to pounce on the pile of top-grade equipment littering the ground instead.

The choices that they had been presented before were either ‘to kill the target after picking up the items’ or ‘to pick up the items before killing the target’. Currently, the options became ‘picking up the items before they got killed’ or ‘getting killed without being able to pick up any items’.

Since the options had become clear cut for them, they all naturally chose the first option: ‘To pick up the items before they got killed.’ Considering that the item rewards for this guild versus guild tournament were entirely up to chance, they decided to abandon their lives to Svelte Dancer’s vicious attacks in exchange for the top-class ‘rewards’ littering the ground. [A Chinese Odyssey](#) had already taught them the lesson that “what followed after a missed opportunity would only be disappointment and regret’.

Svelte Dancer became rattled when she saw the enemy players’ outrageous action of picking up her items. She had previously tossed out these items due to her circumstance and not because she considered them as trash. It would naturally be best for Svelte Dancer if nobody picked them up, yet this bunch of men actually ignored the fight just to shamelessly obtain her top-grade items. “YOU PEOPLE DARE TO PICK MY ITEMS UP?!” Svelte Dancer yelled angrily.

“Quickly pick ‘em up!” Her shout only made everyone become more frantic at picking up the items, though. The remaining few who were still clueless about the value of her items were jolted by her shout as well and chose to prioritize picking up her items over their own life-and-death matters.

Svelte Dancer felt like crying, yet no tears would come out. After

all, she had no way of saving all her equipment no matter how fast she was! Just as Svelte Dancer was about to save what few items she could, a bellow came from behind her, “STEP ASIDE, LADY!”

“What?” Svelte Dancer asked as she turned her head around. Heat suddenly began to build up from beneath her feet. “F*ck!” Svelte Dancer, who had plenty of combat experience just like Gu Fei, quickly dove to the side as a raging inferno sprouted from the ground.

“Couldn’t you chant a little louder?!” Svelte Dancer exclaimed indignantly at Gu Fei. Had it not been for her swift speed, that Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno spell would have engulfed her alongside the others. Knowing very well how terrifying Gu Fei’s Spell Damage was, Svelte Dancer was even uncertain if she could survive his attack.

“If I chanted any bit louder, the opponents would hear it!” Gu Fei muttered under his breath.

Her dropped items now lay undisturbed on the ground as the players who had tried to grab them were reduced by Gu Fei into ashes, making her feel a lot better.

“Go get rid of that guy!” Gu Fei pointed to Young Master Han who was standing in a distance.

The Priest Young Master Han was supposed to provide steady support in this PvP, yet his knowledge of the two players’ insane insta-killing capabilities had him observing the fight at a safe distance. What use was a Priest when facing such monsters, anyway?

“What’s the rush? Let me pick up my items first.” With that, Svelte Dancer prioritized picking up her dropped items over slaying Young Master Han.

“You’re like the richest player in this game, so why are you getting so flustered over these trinkets? Just buy them all again!”

Gu Fei reasoned.

Svelte Dancer threw him a sidelong glance, “I’m rich, not stupid. Why would I toss money away?!”

“If you’re not stupid, why did you toss them in the first place?”

“Because you told me to toss them!”

You tossed these items just because I told you to do so, and you dare say that you are not stupid? was what Gu Fei said to himself. Seeing that Svelte Dancer had truly prioritized picking up her items, he could only dash toward Young Master Han himself.

Young Master Han had long fled the scene. Gu Fei wanted Svelte Dancer to chase after him not because he was lenient toward a person he knew but because he currently had no means of killing Young Master Han.

Gu Fei’s mana recovery after eating his banana was not completed yet. When he casted Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno to help Svelte Dancer recover her items, his action depleted as well as disrupted the recovery of his mana. Even if he caught up to Young Master Han, Gu Fei could currently only deal physical attacks that had no way of insta-killing anyone at him. Considering Young Master Han’s prowess as a Priest, Gu Fei could not take him down without insta-killing him.

Just as he had thought, Gu Fei caught up to Young Master Han yet his every stab was met by the latter’s Heal. Young Master Han smiled brightly at Gu Fei, “You can’t kill me like this.”

“I’ll grind your HP to zero; let’s see how much mana you’ve got,” Gu Fei smiled back as he continued to stab Young Master Han with his sword.

“I have plenty of mana,” Young Master Han said as he bestowed Heal on himself once more.

“There will be a time when that runs out!” Gu Fei remarked as he stabbed forward once more.

“My reinforcement will have arrived by then,” Young Master Han said matter-of-factly as he bestowed Heal on himself yet again.

“I better hurry, then,” Gu Fei said nonchalantly as he thrust his sword forward yet again.

The two chatted and fought like this. Svelte Dancer ran over after she had picked up all her items and was stunned by the scene before her.

“Ah! Seems like MY reinforcement has arrived first!” Gu Fei said in elation.

“Better watch your steps this time, beautiful!” Young Master Han did not seem to fear her arrival at all.

“Ah?!” Svelte Dancer asked as she continued to stand there dumbly.

“What are you freezing up for? Quickly kill him off!” Gu Fei thundered.

“But you guys know each other!” Svelte Dancer reasoned. With Young Master Han’s unforgettable visage, she easily remembered meeting him at Ray’s Bar. Thus, she knew very well that he and Gu Fei were in the same mercenary group.

Gu Fei did not know whether to laugh or cry at her remark, “Missy, we’re in a PvP match right now. JUST HURRY UP!”

“You sure are a vicious one!” Svelte Dancer sharply exhaled as she rushed forward.

Just as she was about to reach Young Master Han, a sudden whirlwind rose from the ground and spun toward her. The usually fearless Svelte Dancer had a rapid change of expression as she dodged backward. The whirlwind seemed to have eyes of its own as it chased after her. Although the whirlwind’s speed did not match Svelte Dancer’s, she still could not easily make her way around it to reach Young Master Han.

Gu Fei gawked as Young Master Han smilingly explained to him, “You haven’t seen this before, right? That’s the Water Mage’s level 40 skill, Arctic Whirlwind. It is the ultimate headache for players like her that depend on speed. Besides dealing damage to whomever caught inside the whirlwind, it has the additional effect of reducing a character’s speed, weakening the source of strength for someone like her.”

Young Master Han looked at a certain distance as he talked. Gu Fei followed his gaze and saw a blue-robed Mage wielding a liquid blue magic stave to and fro like a cheerleader.

“That’s Brave Surge,” Young Master Han introduced to Gu Fei, adding, “He’s our guild leader. Currently ranked ninth on the Mage leaderboard. He chose to be a Water Mage for his level 40 Job Class Advancement.”

“Your guild leader!” Gu Fei muttered, immediately abandoning Young Master Han for Brave Surge. Capturing the ringleader to defeat the bandits! Even if eliminating the guild leader did not have the effect of beheading the hydra’s head, it would at least raise his and Amethyst Rebirth’s morale. Although boosting the morale would not increase his fighting prowess, it would still make him feel good about himself. He could even boast to others that: “Taking the head of the guild leader of seven hundred men is as easy as taking an item out of my dimensional pocket.” Fighting with Brave Surge also meant that he would no longer have to badger Svelte Dancer and could let her finally deal with Young Master Han, killing two birds with one stone.

Gu Fei thought of all these as he dashed toward his target. Seeing Gu Fei’s speed, Brave Surge dared not underestimate him and promptly pointed his magic staff to Gu Fei as he finished an incantation.

Gu Fei could feel heat building up from beneath his feet... He was well aware that Carouse’s guild leader had just casted a Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno spell. Time was needed from the end of

the incantation until the activation of the spell – the area that Gu Fei’s spells were lacking.

Just as he hurried to escape Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno’s AOE, he noticed Brave Surge chanting words with a wave of his magic stave again. Gu Fei’s mind quickly raced. Halting his forward sprint, he retreated from where he had intended to go. With a deafening boom, the area Gu Fei had planned to head just then was set aglow by Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno sprouting from beneath the earth and Descending Wheel of Flames rolling down the sky.

That was close! Gu Fei thought to himself. Casting the Descending Wheel of Flames spell fortunately required the spell-caster to verbally chant the incantation, allowing him to realize what was about to happen. Had he continued his forward sprint, he might have been able to dodge the raging inferno but he would have surely run straight into the flame wheel.

Brave Surge had taken into account Gu Fei’s movement speed and placed these two spells accordingly. Fortunately, Gu Fei had reacted in time.

“Bravo. Not even falling for this move,” Young Master Han applauded from behind him.

With Svelte Dancer no longer being held back by Arctic Whirlwind, she got right up to Young Master Han’s side and stabbed him with her dagger.

“You two! It’s dangerous to be near me,” Young Master Han smilingly warned.

The two were momentarily stunned by his warning. They then felt the ground beneath them heating up as flashes appeared above their heads. Who knew how many Mages had chanted Descending Wheel of Flames and Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno to fill the space where Gu Fei, Svelte Dancer, and Young Master Han stood on as well as blot out the very sky above the trio’s heads.

“There’s no way that you two can escape this no matter how fast you are!” Young Master Han showed them a slight smile, saying, “My tactics will even sacrifice myself when the need calls for it.”

Gu Fei did not even bother to flee and just helplessly addressed Svelte Dancer, “Hey. All things considered, you’re still the richest player in the game. Do you have any magical artifact that’s similar to a [Pandora’s Chest](#)?”

A Chinese Odyssey - A movie based on ‘Journey to the West’ with a modern twist. It was directed by Jeffrey Lau and starred Stephen Chow. Worth the watch if you're cool with slapstick comedy with adage and parables.

Pandora’s Chest - here refers to an important item in the movie mentioned above. Gu Fei wrongly called it 'Pandora's Chest' instead of 'Pandora's Box'.

Chapter 159 - The Remaining Five

“Pandora’s Chest? Don’t you mean [Pandora’s Box](#)?” Svelte Dancer still had the mind to correct Gu Fei at such a critical moment.

“See you at the teleportation array!” Young Master Han cheerfully waved at Gu Fei.

“See you there...” As Gu Fei helplessly nodded his head to Young Master Han, Svelte Dancer suddenly shouted, “Got it!”

“Got what?” Gu Fei asked.

The flame wheels in the sky had already formed up and the raging infernos on the ground had become hotter. There was no time to explain, so Svelte Dancer pounced directly onto Gu Fei and landed on his back.

“What are you doing?!” Gu Fei struggled to take her weight in.

Svelte Dancer had taken out an item from her dimensional pocket mid-flight that caused the wind to stir. Gu Fei did not clearly see what it was, only that it glowed white as it began to quickly envelop them.

“A portable teleportation array?! What the f*ck!” Young Master Han was indeed an experienced gamer as he was able to recognize the item for what it was with a glance. A teleportation array did not differentiate between its users and would affect all who entered its boundary. With Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer now inside the teleportation array, Young Master Han would naturally have to suffer the spell bombardment alone. He could of course not accept such a development and immediately darted over, trying to enter the teleportation array as well.

“Oh, you don’t have to be so polite. There is really no need to send us off!” Gu Fei smilingly said as he lifted his leg and kicked Young Master Han away.

Young Master Han was truly no match for Gu Fei when it came to hand-to-hand combat, so he was unable to dodge the latter's kick and was forcibly sent backpedaling for quite a few steps. Regaining his balance and looking over, Young Master Han saw Gu Fei waving him off as the latter's figure became a blur.

“What a vicious move! Truly a cruel man!” Svelte Dancer muttered under her breath as white light whisked the two of them away.

At that same moment, the countless Descending Wheel of Flames dropped from the sky and numerous Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno spread on the ground, swallowing Young Master Han whole as he uttered a muffled, “F*ck!”

Teleportation was an instantaneous act for the system, so Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer had already found themselves in another place even before Young Master Han died. “Where are we?” Gu Fei asked as he took in the surrounding flora and fauna.

“We are still somewhere in the PvP arena. This Teleportation Scroll doesn't have a fixed pair of coordinates set on it so it randomly teleports players when used,” Svelte Dancer replied.

“Teleportation Scroll...” Gu Fei mumbled. When he showed the members of Young Master's Elite his Windchaser's Emblem, they were very surprised to find out that Parallel World had items for teleportation. And yet, Svelte Dancer here already had a Teleportation Scroll on her. Pay-to-win players were indeed a different breed altogether.

Svelte Dancer saw their coordinates and exclaimed, “Ah! We're quite far from where we were.”

“There's no hurry,” Gu Fei laughed. He pulled out his friends list and sent Young Master Han a message, “You dead?” Young Master Han was a skilled Priest, so he might have been able to grasp the timing between the spells and timely bestow Heal on himself to survive the bombardment.

However, today was apparently not Young Master Han's lucky day. His guildmates' perfect coordination of their attacks left him no chance to save himself and he was instantly teleported to the plaza outside the Main Hall of Guilds! Grinding his teeth, Young Master Han spat, "This is why I hate pay-to-win players the most! They always have something weird that can destroy tactics...."

"Mhm-mhm. I'll help you stare at her with contempt," Gu Fei replied, not bothering with Young Master Han any longer as he learned from the system messages the terrible situation of Amethyst Rebirth.

While Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer had been dealing with Young Master Han and the lot, the rest of the ladies had also been clashing with the enemy forces. The system messages that Gu Fei had just seen were announcing the deaths of the players from both sides.

By the time Gu Fei looked at these system announcements, Amethyst Rebirth had been left with seven players while Carouse had only lost twenty-nine members if Svelte Dancer and Gu Fei's kills were included as well. That was not even 5% of the members Carouse had in this match.

The time it took Gu Fei to glance through these messages, Amethyst Rebirth had lost yet another two members, leaving them with only five players in the PvP arena. Since they were on the same team, he could see these survivors' names. Besides Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer, the remaining three players on Amethyst Rebirth's side were July, Lie Lie, and Will-low.

"Xiaowu, Miles, Will-low, where are you guys?" July asked on the guild channel. It seemed that Lie Lie was with July since she did not mention her.

"Miles and I used a Teleportation Scroll to escape the enemies' bombardment," Svelte Dancer answered.

"I'm at the nearby woodland. No one has found me yet," Will-low

answered.

“Lie Lie and I managed to escape the encirclement under Luo Luo’s protection,” July sighed.

“It’s a pity Sis Luo Luo did not manage to escape,” Lie Lie sounded hurt.

“So what do we do now?” Will-low asked.

“Luo Luo just messaged us to ask for your guidance, Miles. Something about you having the experience to deal with the current situation?” July asked this in a suspicious tone.

Only Luo Luo and Will-low in Amethyst Rebirth knew that Gu Fei was a member of Young Master’s Elite. Although Svelte Dancer had barged into their mercenary group meeting, she still did not know that they were the Young Master’s Elite. Luo Luo was naturally referring to Gu Fei’s experience participating in the PvP match between Young Master’s Elite and Cloud Herder.

“Fighting many with few. I do have a bit of experience in that,” Gu Fei nodded his head.

“I see. So what do you suggest we do?” July asked.

“Uhm. Let me think for a bit!” Gu Fei replied as he sent Young Master Han a message, “Hey. We are now left with five members. Is there any method for us to defeat your guild?” Gu Fei looked to him, the online gaming strategist, for external aid.

The answer Young Master Han provided was: “Scram!”

“Come on... Don’t be like that, man! I’ve already heavily chastised Svelte Dancer for her shameless actions,” Gu Fei cajoled.

“Uhhh... To be honest, beating over six hundred players with just five players is indeed a challenge,” Young Master Han admitted.

“That’s right!” Gu Fei thought that Young Master Han’s interest had been piqued, so he quickly agreed with his observation.

“I sure wanna give it a try!”

“Try it! I’ll listen to your commands!” Gu Fei was glad that he was interested.

“But there’s just no way!”

“Why?” Gu Fei could not understand his next words.

“Because I’ve already helped Carouse set up the best method to deal with you five! Since the methods I come up with are usually perfect, I can’t even find a loophole to exploit myself. Sigh... I truly can’t help you at all!” Young Master Han sent him this message.

“I really wanna beat you up right now!” Gu Fei gritted his teeth angrily.

“That will have to wait till you get out, or you can just head somewhere with many Carouse’s men and kill yourself. That’s also pretty fast. Shall I help to get their coordinates for you?”

“Just you wait!” Gu Fei indignantly roared.

“He he he....” was Young Master Han’s next reply.

“Coward!” Gu Fei sent someone else a message.

“Don’t call me that. Call me Coward’s Savior!” Coward’s Savior admonished.

“Are you busy right now? Do you know where Ray’s Bar is? If not, just ask around and you will know how to get there. When you reach there, go to the second curtain door in the back rooms and you should see a guy that looks like a woman. Go beat him up for me,” Gu Fei instructed.

“What for?”

“I’m giving you a chance to experience actual combat! Don’t kill him and just give him a good thrashing using kung fu. Remember to cover your face.”

“Cover my face? Why?”

“Don’t ask too many questions. I’ll tell you about it later. Quickly

get this done!”

“Got it!” Coward’s Savior went out to execute his order.

Gu Fei closed the conversation window with a relieved sigh and turned around to find Svelte Dancer staring at him, “What?”

“What are you doing?! Everyone’s waiting for you to explain your strategy on the channel!” Svelte Dancer replied.

“I can’t think of any!” Gu Fei said on the guild channel. “A deviant helped them set up a strategy to specifically deal with us. Winning this guild match will be very difficult for us!” Although Young Master Han was unlikeable in many ways, Gu Fei actually looked highly upon his ability to come up with brilliant battle strategies. Had it not been for Svelte Dancer’s item earlier, they would have been taken down by Young Master Han’s previous stratagem.

“What strategy?” July asked.

“I don’t know yet,” Gu Fei replied.

“So how do you know that it's very difficult?” Lie Lie asked.

“Because that strategist is a really depraved person. Naturally, the plans he comes up with are equally twisted,” Gu Fei patiently explained.

“Who is this ‘he’?” The ladies’ gossiping nature was aroused.

“He’s a deviant,” was Gu Fei’s only answer. Calling Young Master Han a deviant was one thing, revealing his identity to the ladies was another thing. Gu Fei did not intend to slander Young Master Han’s reputation.

“Tsk...” all the ladies replied this, evidently feeling dissatisfied with his answer. Svelte Dancer even harrumphed directly at Gu Fei to show him her dissatisfaction.

“Whatever the case might be, we are now behind with a score of 29 against 46. If we want to win, we should at least catch up in

terms of kill points, right?” Will-low was indeed a fan of Brother Assist. Her keen sense toward data came into play at this crucial moment.

“That’s right!” Svelte Dancer agreed, saying, “Hide yourself well, girls. Leave this matter to me and Miles.” Svelte Dancer’s suggestion was normal. Despite July, Will-low, and Lie Lie’s levels being high in Amethyst Rebirth, they were still subpar compared to Carouse’s players.

“Let’s go!” Svelte Dancer declared to Gu Fei.

“Don’t be so hasty,” Gu Fei said to her.

“What now?”

“Wait till I finish eating my banana.”

“Why do you have to eat this soon? You’re always eating a banana during the key moments. How annoying!” Svelte Dancer expressed her dissatisfaction with him once more.

“You’re right. It’s getting pretty dull to eat that all the time,” Gu Fei sighed, adding, “Guess I’ll eat an apple this time.”

Svelte Dancer was left speechless by his answer that showed his misinterpretation of her complaint.

Pandora’s Box - in this case, refers to that device used as a time portal in the movie mentioned in the previous chapter. Clearly, it is not related to the actual Pandora's Box.

Chapter 160 - A Twisted Stratagem

Gu Fei finished an apple to recover his mana fully before joining Svelte Dancer on the mission to make their comeback from a score of 29 against 46.

There were currently six hundred seventy-six players of Carouse in this PvP arena. None of them was weak by any standard and was handpicked from the many great players that had offered their services to the guild.

Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer's expressions were somber, and their footsteps were heavy. To face against six hundred seventy-six players with just the two of them... They were both experts, so it was a given that they possessed at least a basic level of judgement to choose the right course of action. If they were able to clash head on with these six hundred seventy-six players of equal expertise and still be evenly matched, the game designers would really have to gather in the city to perform a mass seppuku ritual.

They could only hope to find a few stragglers of Carouse and take their heads. Naturally, Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer's concept of a few stragglers was more than just a few and would consider a group of players as such provided that it was made up of less than ten individuals.

Wandering blindly in hopes of an opportune meeting with a few enemies was obviously a bad idea given the map's huge size, so the two decided to head toward a vantage point and look around first. If the two did not find any viable targets, they would move to another vantage point and repeat the process.

This was how they proceeded toward the center of the map without encountering even the shadows of Carouse's players. July and the other two ladies were also left untouched as none of Carouse's members could be seen around at all.

"Just what is going on?" Svelte Dancer asked Gu Fei as they

climbed up the fourth mountain since they had started their search. “Could they be hiding from us despite having numerical superiority?”

The side that holds numerical superiority is hiding from the side that lacks the numbers? Gu Fei mulled over this idea as he vaguely thought of something. That was when Svelte Dancer who had reached the summit first yelled out, “Hurry up and take a look at this!”

Reaching the peak of the mountain, Gu Fei looked toward the direction that Svelte Dancer’s hand was pointing at and inhaled sharply.

A small plateau not too far from the mountain that they were on was filled with men. The wriggling crowd of men looked like a huge swarm of locust piled up from the slope to the peak of that highland....

“Ugh... It’s so disgusting!” Svelte Dancer wrinkled her brows and covered her mouth, as if she wanted to vomit from the mere sight of them.

So this is the stratagem that Young Master Han came up with? Trying to make us die from sheer revulsion, maybe? Gu Fei could feel beads of cold sweat trickling down his back and quickly sent Coward’s Savior another message: “Use more strength when you punch him.”

“Just what are they doing?” Svelte Dancer calmed herself by placing a hand on her chest.

Gu Fei observed the wriggling mass of players for a while and noticed that they seemed to be moving up the plateau. It was obvious that every Carouse’s member was here based on the wriggling mob’s volume. They had essentially collected their manpower on that hill, occupying the high ground while disdainfully looking at the terrain below. Just how would the Amethyst Rebirth’s five members be able to earn any kill points

from such a formation?

Gu Fei now fully understood the reasoning behind Young Master Han's stratagem. This strategy he had in place was a cautious overestimation of Svelte Dancer and Gu Fei's destructive force by making six hundred seventy-six players adopt a defensive position against the two of them.

Although others would disdain Carouse's move, Gu Fei had to admit that countering such a strategy was impossible from where they currently stood.

"So shameless!" Gu Fei irately remarked. He opened his friends list once more and contacted Coward's Savior. He typed out one line of instruction this time: "Just kill him." At the very last second, however, he refrained from sending out this message. It was best not to be too hasty as grinding levels was not easy.

"This... What now!" Svelte Dancer could also tell the severity of the situation with a few quick glances. The only possible method for the two of them to fight these six hundred seventy-six enemies was to employ sneak attacks, yet Carouse's players had positioned themselves atop the mesa which afforded them a three-hundred-sixty-degree view of the surroundings. The enemies would surely notice their movement no matter which direction Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer chose to mount their attacks.

Carouse's Archers and Mages numbered into the hundreds respectively. With so many long-range players, Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer would still be unable to get close to the enemies even if they combined their speed. The difference of kill points would be really difficult to recover at this rate.

Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer sat cross-legged on the ground and began to discuss possible tactics, not minding if they exposed their position to the hundreds of enemies in the mesa opposite them. Nonetheless, Carouse continued to hold a defensive position without taking notice of their presence.

Their Plan A of focusing on a few stragglers had already failed. Carouse apparently planned to camp out by that mesa until the match timer ended and did not plan to initiate any form of attacks against Amethyst Rebirth.

They proceeded with their Plan B next. Svelte Dancer rushed down the mountain, stood just a step outside of the enemies' attack range, and bellowed: "If you're a man, come down and fight a deathmatch with me!" Following this, she goaded the enemies for three times by repeatedly saying, "I dare you all to kill me right here, right now!" The players of Carouse eventually shouted back in unison: "Lassie, why don't you just sing and dance for us?!" Thus, it was Svelte Dancer who had ended up falling for the enemies' provocation. She would have tried to rush up that hill had Gu Fei not timely intervened by forcefully dragging her back to safety.

As the two headed back to the mountaintop, Svelte Dancer furiously asked, "Do they want me to strip and dance for them before they make a move?"

Gu Fei looked her in the eye and simply replied, "No use. You'll only give them a visual treat. Moving their eyes is the most that they will do."

Plan C. Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer silently stayed on the mountain as did the six hundred seventy-six men by the plateau. Quite some time later, two pretty female Fighters and one skinny female Thief arrived from the east mound and unhesitatingly walked around the foot of the plateau. Atop the mesa, Carouse's six hundred seventy-six players silently looked on at the three ladies. Completing their trip around the mesa, the three ladies then waved at them, "Friends atop this plateau, how are you doing?"

The mesa suddenly came alive as countless players hollered back, "Hello, beautiful ladies!" Despite their enthusiastic response, the players' formation did not change a bit.

Having gingerly walked their way around the mesa, the three ladies sighed as they headed toward the mountain where their two guildmates were situated.

Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer shook their heads. Carouse truly intended to stick to their shameless plan until the very end, even letting July, Will-low, and Lie Lie, whom they could easily crush, walk by. The opponents were indeed very composed.

The five sat on that mountain with varying degrees of glumness.

“Forget it! Let’s just consider ourselves lucky for even reaching this stage of the guild versus guild tournament,” July consoled her fellow guildmates with this. As the guild leader, she had a very clear idea about their strength and their win over the Forever in Flowers Guild was already puzzling enough. The whole scene inside that forest before had left many of the ladies in dangerous predicaments, yet their opponents merely let them off. They could chalk it up to the opponents’ carelessness as well as their luck once or twice, but for it to repeatedly happen until all the opponents had been wiped out, the ladies could tell that those of Forever in Flowers were going easy on them.

Facing against Carouse today, they attempted to emulate how Young Master’s Elite had managed to achieve a victory with a lesser team. But Amethyst Rebirth was already falling behind in terms of kill points, and it was their superior opponents that had actually chosen to take a defensive stance and to wait until the time ran out. It was very likely done to prevent the indomitable Gu Fei and mighty Svelte Dancer from doing any further damage. “This match would end long ago if they were not staying in that plateau,” July sighed.

“Those trashy people,” Svelte Dancer cursed as she pointed to the throng of men by the opposite mesa, saying, “To actually use such a method despite having so many men on their side. Truly despicable and shameless!”

Gu Fei did not follow suit and curse at their opponents. Instead, he chose to ask Will-low what she had observed when they made the trip around the foot of the mesa.

“Besides the outer layer being made up of Archers, the majority of the combatants there are Mages,” Will-low reported, elaborating, “They seem capable of engaging in long range fight in that three-hundred-sixty-degree area. From the number of Mages, they should be able to unleash a spell bombardment of up to a radius of thirty meters. As for the Archers, I reckon they have an additional range of thirty meters from that spell bombardment area, but only if they are using basic attacks. Depending on the skills used, Snipe will let them reach further while Homing Projectile will only let them fire off arrows at a closer range!”

Gu Fei nodded his head. Carouse’s guild leader was a Mage. This must have directly influenced the guild composition such that the prevailing job class in it was Mage. This could also be seen from the spell cordon that they had previously used to zone Gu Fei as well as the ten-meter radius spell bombardment that they had performed to eliminate Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer.

“Hmm... If I can complete my spell incantation but I die before I am able to use the spell, will the spell continue to initiate the attack?” Gu Fei suddenly asked a very amateurish question.

“It won’t,” Will-low answered, explaining, “The officials designed this game so that magic attacks are not physical manifestations. After a spell is chanted, it will still be affected by a Mage’s Magic Attack Power. If the spell-caster dies, the ensuing Spell Damage will disappear as well. Still, additional effects, like the burning effect of Twin Incineration, will persist.”

“Oh....”

“So have you already come up with something?” Svelte Dancer asked as she patted Gu Fei’s shoulder.

“I’ve got an idea!” Gu Fei said as he looked at the four ladies.

“What is it?” they asked.

When Gu Fei explained his plan to the ladies, they looked stunned, “Will that work?”

“Let’s calculate it!” Gu Fei grabbed a small branch lying on the ground and asked the ladies a few relevant data and numbers. Doing the math, he sighed, “It looks about right. Let’s risk it!”

The ladies nodded their heads in agreement and began to prepare themselves. Waving his hand, Gu Fei said, “Let’s go!”

Plan D was now underfoot.

The five made their way down the mountain and circled the foot of the mesa, gingerly avoiding what they calculated as the attack range of Carouse’s players while beginning to shout and make a ruckus. Carouse seemed to have gotten used to their taunting and did not even bother to fire back words. All this while, their Archers and Mages calmly waited.

Making their way around, the five slowly but surely neared the range of the Archers’ Snipe. Carouse had only lined their outermost layer with Archers – a formation style that many large-scale PvPps would commonly employ.

Archers faced plenty of limitations in an all-out PvP consisted of the various job classes. Their attacks required an uninhibited path and sight of the targets, and these conditions might not be met when Archers were caught in the midst of a PvP among players. People even tried a battle formation that would provide Archers a direct attack path and clear view of the enemies, but it was quickly proven to be ineffectual. Such a formation just restricted the Archers’ attack range to what was in front of them, and the opponents only had to run diagonally to avoid getting hit by them. If the Archers followed after the targets running diagonally toward them from their peripheral views and adjust their bows’ direction accordingly, they would only end up aiming at their comrades’ butts.

Before finding a better solution to this, all resolved to just directly throw their Archers to the forefront and call it a day.

Anyway, Carouse's known trump card was not its Archers but the disciplined and well-coordinated spell bombardment of its Mages instead. This was why they could afford to position their Archers at the very front. And for Gu Fei and the rest's Plan D to succeed, this was actually one of the safeguards that they needed.

Chapter 161 - Aerial Attacking

If these Archers' placement was arranged just like in the movie 'Hero', they would undoubtedly be able to shoot down even Superman. However, Carouse only had one hundred Archers and their placement was done in a haphazard manner. Evidently, their formation could not hold a candle to the one depicted in that movie.

This was good news to Amethyst Rebirth's five remaining players. If these Archers were properly set up in the outer layer of Carouse's defensive formation, July, Lie Lie, and Will-low would never be able to break through their ranks with their speed. At present, as long as Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer were able to draw most of the Archers' firepower on themselves, the three ladies would have a good chance of succeeding of breaking through the Archers' defensive line.

That was actually the first step of the 'Plan D' that they had in mind, so they would have zero chance of proceeding to the next step of it if they suffered any losses at this stage. Thus, they needed to find a more reliable method to penetrate the Archers' ranks.

"Look. It's at that side," Will-low inclined her head as she said this to her four guildmates.

Carouse's players stratagem was for them to maintain their formation on a high ground in order to have a three-hundred-sixty-degree view of their surroundings, but the emphasis for this stratagem was not actually on how high the formation could be placed, but it was instead on how 'clear' their line of sight was without being obstructed or blocked by the uneven terrains. Even if they managed to find themselves the highest ground possible, it would not be useful if the location was filled with uneven terrains or trees that could block their line of sight, as the enemies could easily use those as cover to sneak up on their high-ground formation.

It was precisely because this plateau had fulfilled Carouse's strategic requirements that they had chosen to maintain their three-hundred-sixty degree formation over here. Unfortunately, nothing perfect existed in the world, as Will-low had just pointed out an uneven terrain wracked with depressions and protrusions near where the Carouse's men had positioned themselves.

It was nothing compared to the cover that players could get within a forest of trees as the view range was still broad and unobstructed, but such a place could provide plenty of cover that would limit the Archers' prowess ever so slightly.

The five showed a calm and somewhat lackadaisical expression on their faces as they headed over there nonchalantly.

"The remaining enemies are now gathered over by that slope", "Shall we rush in and wipe them out completely?", and "We can win if we take them out immediately right now" were the gist of the conversations on Carouse's guild channel right now. In fact, most of Carouse's players felt mystified by the stratagem that they had employed against just five players.

"No..." Brave Surge resolutely refused, explaining, "That Mage's Magic Attack Power is very high. Just his one AOE spell can potentially turn the tide of this match. Going in the offensive here will just give him the chance to capitalize on it. There's Svelte Dancer to worry about, too. With her fast movement speed and this huge PvP arena, it will nearly be impossible for us to surround her, especially if she still has a Teleportation Scroll that will enable her to instantly change her position at any given time. Don't be tempted to make a move on the five as it may very likely provide them something to exploit against us. Take special note of that Mage; as long as he is unable to use any spells, he won't be able to turn this around on us."

With the guild leader's firm words, the members no longer dared to make any suggestions and merely continued to closely watch the five players' movement. Whichever part of the defensive

formation the five headed, the Carouse's players assigned to that portion would be on guard against their every action.

"Ah! They are nearing zone S!" someone reported on the guild channel. Zone S was the one area in the plateau that Will-low had indicated as having depressions and protrusions.

"I know," Brave Surge answered, hinting that the other's report was unnecessary as he himself was keeping an eye on the five.

Zone S was the suitable location if the enemies were planning to make a desperate final assault. Brave Surge believed that Amethyst Rebirth would also arrive at this same conclusion, so he had chosen to personally supervise this part of the formation. Just as he had suspected, the five really indeed chose this location to mount their assault.

"They're all moving together ..." The five of Amethyst Rebirth were now easy targets for long-range attacks, yet Brave Surge insisted that everyone should remain on the current high ground. Besides Young Master Han's warning about the strength of the Mage, Brave Surge was largely cautious of how his opponents were capable of teleporting away to escape their near death situation as they had shown earlier.

Teleportation was a foreign concept to most players in Parallel World. Would the player become invulnerable when under the teleportation's effect? Was it possible to still attack while teleporting? If a Mage finished chanting his or her spell and teleported away, would the spell still be in effect? With the many questions surrounding its usage, Brave Surge could not help but be on guard toward it. They would rather be mocked for how they had won than become a laughingstock like Cloud Herder mercenary group.

After entering zone S, the five immediately dashed into the Archer's attack range as they strove to hide behind the available covers simultaneously. The firing Archers all missed their targets

and helplessly shook their heads toward their guild leader, hoping for any instructions on how they should proceed.

“Just fire off arrows randomly to hamper their advance!” Brave Surge commanded. It was indeed difficult for the Archers to fully utilize their advantage in this part of the plateau, so expecting too much from them would only make things hard for everyone.

Thus, the Archers indiscriminately fired off their arrows despite those basically being useless due to the cover that the terrain provided. The five opposing players managed to find cover as they advanced onward, almost instantly turning into moles as they used the terrain as best as they could. A figure could sometimes be seen flashing out of a mound or half a head could be seen peeking out from inside a depression. This part of the plateau gave the Carouse’s players this grating impression that the current PvP match had turned into a game of whack-a-mole, and that they were each currently trying to whack the lurking moles while holding a mallet.

And so, the Archers as well as everyone powerlessly watched these five figures dart forward fifty or sixty meters before gathering behind a mound together.

The Carouse’s members were utterly distressed! If only these ‘moles’ would move just two more steps from that mound, they would enter the range of the spell bombardment of the Mages. Since the Mages would be casting AOE spells, they did not even have to worry about locking on the targets properly like Archers in order for their attacks to connect.

Seeing that only about thirty meters were separating them from their five enemies, those from Carouse could not stop their hearts from thumping wildly. Ever since they had a clear view of their five opponents just now, they had been raring to rush forward and blast those five to their deaths, yet no one dared to make a move in the end since their guild leader did not give them the go-signal.

“How long has it been since they hid behind that mound?” Brave Surge suddenly asked someone beside him.

The person felt very surprised by the sudden question, but he looked at the time and tried his best to give an accurate response, “It has been eleven seconds...”

His question had revealed how nervous Brave Surge was inside. Seeing that the five had not made any movement, his heart thumped very fast as he felt that each second was passing by very slowly.

“Guild leader, should we—” Many of Carouse’s men were getting impatient. Discovering that their guild leader was also feeling jittery, someone promptly tried to suggest assaulting the enemies.

“[No! Remain as we are to adapt to the potential changes,](#)” Brave Surge interrupted. Although he was feeling equally as anxious as his men, he firmly stood his ground on the matter. Some men’s judgment would be moved by their emotions, while others would attempt to control their emotions and not allow them to interfere with occurrences. Brave Surge was the latter, making him a suitable commander.

Just as he ordered his men to continue holding their horses, a change happened. A figure started popping out from behind the mound and running in the open!

“Quickly fire off an arrow!” Brave Surge hurriedly commanded after seeing that this enemy did not enter a cover once it appeared.

All the Archers were waiting for such a chance for the longest time and eagerly released a rain of arrows on this target. However, this target’s speed was truly too fast and it caused most of the Archers to miss their mark. A few arrows managed to track the target since some of the Archers had fired them off under Homing Projectile, yet whether the arrows could actually hit their mark or not with the person’s speed was another question.

In that moment when the Archers unleashed their attacks, three other figures also stood up from behind the mound. Before the Archers could fire off their second volley of arrows, one of the three players had grabbed a hold of the person's waist on the left and tossed the player out with a jerk of both arms before doing the same thing to the person on the right. By the time the second wave of arrows flew out, those two players had already sailed through the air. Hence, the arrows only found a target on that one upright figure on the mound.

"Excellent throwing skill!" one of the two complimented as they sailed through the air, yet July had already turned into a white light under the barrage of arrows when they looked back to the mound.

"Hit those two with spells!" The Carouse's Mages watched in a daze as the two players sailed through the air, momentarily forgetting that the two had already entered their area of spell bombardment. Brave Surge's loud command managed to drag them back to their senses and they began to chant their spells... But who would have guessed that a figure would suddenly appear from within the casting Mages' ranks next? Coming in with bare fists, this person did not kill anyone but simply shoved and jostled the Mages chanting Descending Wheel of Flames all about.

A Mage could not move or suffer an attack while chanting a spell as either happening could interrupt his or her spell-casting. So not only did those Mages fail to chant their spells, they accidentally jostled the others beside them as well, causing the others to stagger a few steps and also break off their incantations.

Although the melee job classes quickly came to deal with the Thief that had suddenly appeared, the originally perfect weave of spells began to show obvious gaps in the coordinated spell bombardment. Gu Fei and Lie Lie, whom July had previously tossed, met mid-air. As Lie Lie stretched her arms out to grab Gu Fei, she took a quick glance at their surroundings and used Seismic

Toss like what July had done a while ago to toss him further toward the spell bombardment area that had the least overcast of flame wheels. Lie Lie crashed onto the ground by herself and was instantly swallowed by the the raging infernos scorching the land, turning into a beam of white light.

“Miles, good luck!” Will-low shouted. She was currently stuck behind enemy lines and subsequently surrounded by the opposing guild’s melee job classes. Evidently, she would not be able to hold on for long.

Gu Fei had no complaints as the ladies had done their parts to ensure the success of their strategy. He got through the spell bombardment and sailed toward the Carouse’s formation. Against an enemy coming in from the air, the opposing players were at a loss on how to deal with him.

Mid-air, Gu Fei threw off the outer coat covering Midnight Spirit Robe using his two arms and fished out his sword, causing the coat to flutter back in place. Roaring deeply, he intended to flourish his sword as soon as he alighted on the ground, yet he ended up crashing into the ground instead.

Dust and dirt scattered about... and Gu Fei was of course feeling ashamed with himself. He had actually forgotten that since he was hurtled via Seismic Toss over here, the system would require him to fall flat on the ground. All his labor while mid-air to land upright was for naught.

However, a loss was not necessarily a bad thing. Gu Fei’s very embarrassing fall had actually managed to lure many Carouse’s members into encircling him.

Gu Fei rolled on the ground without getting up and used his sword to demonstrate his prone saber style on the enemies. He had not forgotten to cast Twin Incineration while flourishing his sword, trying his best to inflict damage on the highest possible number of enemies around him.

“Six!” Gu Fei felt immensely gratified. This was the highest record of insta-kill he had gotten from combining his kung fu with Twin Incineration thus far; he could hardly believe that he would attain such a feat in dire straits.

After getting the system prompt that six fellow guildmates had been killed off by that one slash, the eyelids of Carouse’s players twitched and someone yelled out: “Don’t be rash! Quickly disperse and get the Archers here!”

However, Gu Fei was already chanting: “Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!”

“INTERRUPT IT! QUICKLY INTERRUPT IT!” Brave Surge frantically bellowed to the guild members nearest Gu Fei.

Gu Fei only had to chant one spell, so no matter how fast Brave Surge could issue his command, it was not possible for the Carouse’s players to carry out his command in time. A raging inferno had already sprouted from below.

This is actually a Taoist philosophy. The crux of the phrase is that when things are unchanged, one must consider possible changes and make preparations for these changes that may occur in future or as a result of things being unchanged.

Chapter 162 - Flawless

The members of Carouse ran helter-skelter as they attempted to evade the spell. Unfortunately, some of them failed to escape Blazing Fire of a Thousand Inferno's wide AOE in time despite quickly leaving their stationary positions.

Nonetheless, Gu Fei's slow casting time still gave most of Carouse's players enough time to make their escape. Glancing at Amethyst Rebirth's score, he saw that it had increased by another 6 kill points. What was originally a score of 29 against 49 had now become 41 against 49. Another nine kills would allow Amethyst Rebirth to turn the tables on Carouse.

No one could stop this reversal, as Gu Fei immediately followed up his chanting of Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno with the incantation for Descending Wheel of Flames. The flame wheel in the sky began to form once the raging inferno sprouted. Some of the players underneath the flame wheel ran away, yet a few unfortunate souls rushed over to the flame wheel's AOE to get away from the raging inferno. These players who had failed to see the flame wheel descending from the sky could not dodge it in time, gaining Gu Fei 11 kill points, which were more than the last spell's.

The tide had finally turned with a score of 52 against 49. Mere moments had passed since Svelte Dancer lured away that first wave of Archers' attacks until now.

"I learned this from you," Gu Fei smilingly said to Brave Surge, who was audibly grinding his teeth in frustration at the turn of events. The two spells Gu Fei had just casted truly resembled a bit of Carouse's spell bombardment. When Young Master Han introduced the guild leader of Carouse to Gu Fei, Brave Surge left a strong impression of his spell-casting with his blue magic staff to Gu Fei.

Brave Surge gritted his teeth harder. Casting two AOE spells might seem easy, but besides timing the chanting, one must calculate the target's movement speed and predict his or her intended direction as well. Doing all these necessary steps prior to execution ensured that the second spell would not miss. As for Gu Fei, he did not need to think too much about these when casting his spells as he currently had plenty of targets to choose from.

“Arctic Whirlwind! Release!” Brave Surge raised his magic staff and a whirlwind came into existence, heading toward Gu Fei while spinning.

“You still wanna fight with me?!” Gu Fei smiled, saying, “You’re better off chasing after Svelte Dancer!”

Brave Surge continued to grind his teeth in frustration. Some of his men who had been chasing after Svelte Dancer just sent him this message: “She was very fast!” so Brave Surge was very aware that there was no way to chase after her.

Brave Surge knew that they would most likely lose this match. Feeling heartbroken, he now just wanted to take revenge on Gu Fei.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” Gu Fei did not choose to evade Brave Surge’s Arctic Whirlwind; instead, he met it head on by sweeping his sword with both hands as he finished chanting a spell toward Arctic Whirlwind.

The twin dragons entwining around Moonlit Nightfalls blazed fiercely as it slashed Arctic Whirlwind in half, dissipating it in an instant. Gu Fei brought his hands to his sides and said to Brave Surge, “Alright. Stop messing around.”

Brave Surge felt extremely shocked by what he had just witnessed. It was not actually that surprising for Arctic Whirlwind to be cleaved away by a heavy physical attack, as quite a lot of strong Warriors could do that. But while Arctic Whirlwind’s Spell Damage would be reduced once it got dissipated, the spell’s

additional freezing effect that reduced speed would still come into play once it touched the enemy. And yet, Gu Fei's movement seemed completely normal, as if the spell's freezing effect did not get triggered.

Only one explanation could justify this: The burning effect of Gu Fei's Twin Incineration was deemed stronger by Verdict to the point of completely suppressing Arctic Whirlwind's freezing effect. For him to have such a high level of proficiency toward Twin Incineration, just what sort of Mage was he building?

Brave Surge began to take note of Gu Fei's sword in hand and tried to appraise it, only getting rows of question marks in the end.

Gu Fei walked about casually as Carouse's six hundred members kept him trapped within. Raising a hand to his brow, he swept his gaze around him and sighed deeply, "Oh, dear! I can't even see where Svelte Dancer has run off to!"

Gu Fei said that while fishing out an apple from his dimensional pocket to bite on it. Unexpectedly, he heard a whooshing sound that was quickly followed by a satisfying thwack. An arrow had struck the apple in his hand, splattering its flesh and juice all over his face.

Expressionlessly turning his head over and seeing an Archer with a raised bow, his face showed a good deal of shock. "You saw through me!" Gu Fei acknowledged, asking, "But don't tell me that you were only aiming for that apple?"

The person felt quite embarrassed.

"Alright, I admit it. I'm out of mana," Gu Fei raised his hands, adding, "Kill me if you wish!" Not one player was around him at this point in time.

Brave Surge raised his hand and several Archers and Mages came out.

"Hey, don't be like this! Send me two melee job classes to play

with!” Gu Fei dejectedly requested.

Brave Surge ignored his request as he issued an order. The Archers shot out arrows on Homing Projectile while the Mages casted AOE spells to where Gu Fei was.

“Fireball! Shoot!” Gu Fei defiantly countered their attacks by using his last bit of mana to cast the most basic spell in his arsenal.

The opponents’ attacks all struck the part where Gu Fei was, yet he did not try to dodge any of them, as there would be no use in doing so. Finally, Gu Fei was reduced into a stream of white light that soon faded away.

The Fireball unsteadily floated toward the crowd, but given how experienced all these players were, no one tried to dodge it as they knew that Fireball no longer had any Spell Damage on it and a simple slap from one of them would extinguish it.

“Every second counts! Go and find Svelte Dancer fast,” Brave Surge ordered and proceeded to look all around him. The scenery before him blurred as he suddenly realized the vastness of this PvP arena, causing his heart palpitate erratically as the task at hand overwhelmed him.

Gu Fei’s vision darkened for a bit before returning to normal. He then found himself by the teleportation array outside the Main Hall of Guilds. The Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies were around him. The sight of Gu Fei being crowded by a bevy of babes immediately attracted the envy of the other male players nearby: “Look at that guy! To be teleported right in the middle of so many ladies, how very lucky of him!”

“What happened? How’s everything?” The ladies each asked Gu Fei. Players that were transported outside of the PvP arena would be unable to hear the system announcements for their respective ongoing matches, so none of the ladies knew of the current score.

“We’ve made a comeback in terms of kill points,” Gu Fei

answered.

All the ladies cheered.

“Good luck, Xiaowu!” The guild channel was filled with words of encouragement and celebration.

Gu Fei smiled at the sight of the ladies’ rejoicing and quietly moved to leave.

“Where are you going?” Quite a few of them had noticed Gu Fei leaving and asked this question.

“I’ve got something on, so I’ll take my leave first and see you all tomorrow!” Gu Fei replied and squeezed his way through the crowd, running straight toward Ray’s Bar.

“Where’s Young Master?” Gu Fei quietly asked Ray upon entering the bar.

Ray pointed to Room 2.

Gu Fei giddily walked toward the said room and lifted the curtain before freezing on the spot. Young Master Han was indeed inside the room, and so was Coward's Savior. The two were enthusiastically exchanging drinks, and Coward's Savior was even insistently pushing a chunk of grilled meat toward Young Master Han. “This is the best one! Grilling this chunk alone has increased my proficiency by three points. Have a taste!”

Both men turned to look at Gu Fei when he entered the room. Coward's Savior hurriedly placed the grilled meat down as he got up to greet Gu Fei. Young Master Han stared at him with a placid smile on his face.

“Sigh...” Gu Fei forced a smile on his face and said, “You guys are... getting along quite well!”

“Quite well indeed. What else do you expect?” Young Master Han laughed coldly as he raised his glass to toast with Coward's Savior.

Coward's Savior drained his glass in one gulp and said to Gu Fei

while patting the seat next to him, “Sit down, Drunk bro! I am still waiting for the man that you’re talking about. It’s a good thing that you arrived first; I’ll put on a good show for you in just a minute.” Gu Fei had resolutely refused Coward's Savior calling him Master, but the latter had insisted on having a respectable title for him, so Gu Fei finally settled on having Coward’s Savior address him in the same way that Fireball was doing. Gu Fei learned that Coward’s Savior was younger than him, so this way of addressing him was not inappropriate.

“Alright! Alright!” Gu Fei stopped Coward's Savior from talking further, saying, “Go ahead and resume what you were doing a while ago. No need for your help here anymore.”

“Ah?”

“It’s fine. Just go and be busy with your things!” Gu Fei patted him on his shoulder.

“Oh!” Coward's Savior bade farewell to Young Master Han and prepared to leave. Before leaving, he reminded Gu Fei, “Don’t call me Coward. Call me Coward’s Savior. Kung fu produces no cowards!”

“Alright. I got it Coward,” Gu Fei completely ignored his request.

Coward's Savior nodded his head in satisfaction and left the room, not realizing that Gu Fei had still called him as ‘Coward’.

“He he he he...” Gu Fei gazed at Young Master Han with a stupid grin plastered on his face.

“‘A man that looks like a woman’? ‘Beat him up good’, eh?” Young Master Han said.

“What? No... That is all a misunderstanding!” Gu Fei vehemently denied.

“Is that so? Just which part was it that I have misunderstood?” Young Master Han clicked his tongue as he asked sarcastically. Evidently, Young Master Han had learned of Gu Fei’s order and

had somehow duped Coward's Savior into thinking that he was not the one that Gu Fei was talking about. Since the matters had gotten to this point, Gu Fei could only shamelessly press on, slapping the table with no regard, "Don't be so arrogant! Do you think no one's gonna beat you up just because that guy left? I'm still sitting right here! I'll just beat you up myself if I have to!"

"Did you get by that match fine?"

"It was alright."

This was how intelligent men acted when trying to change a subject: not dragging things out and going straight to a point.

"Your so-called flawless strategy doesn't seem to be much, after all!" Gu Fei goaded.

"You turned the tables on us?" Young Master Han asked.

Gu Fei nodded his head.

"Oh. How did you do it?" Young Master Han pressed on.

Gu Fei explained the process.

"Using Seismic Toss twice to get across the spell bombardment and you're not dead? You?" Young Master Han found this entire account incredulous.

"I calculated it," Gu Fei replied, explaining, "The two ladies removed all their equipment that boosts their damage, so their Seismic Toss could only half my HP. Then, I borrowed an item with magic resistance from Svelte Dancer, pushing my fire resistance all the way up to 73% and allowing me to make it through the spell bombardment with enough HP."

"That woman is perverse!" Young Master Han mumbled.

"He he..." Gu Fei merely laughed.

"Such a violent method is all you can think of?" Young Master Han asked.

“What’s your expert method, then?” Gu Fei countered.

“Doesn’t she have a Teleportation Scroll? Wouldn’t going in using Stealth and marking the coordinates work just as well?” Young Master Han sarcastically inquired.

“Uhm....”

“Plus, they were gathered up just waiting for you lot to try and do a reversal on them. Why did you act so soon? Wouldn’t it be better for you lot to do this at the last minute? Now, if they manage to find and take care of Svelte Dancer, won’t all your efforts go down the drain?” Young Master Han looked at the time as he continued, “There are still thirty minutes left before the match is over.”

“Uhm...” Gu Fei could only hum at this.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk!” Young Master Han repeatedly clucked his tongue loudly while shaking his head.

“Didn’t you say that your stratagem is flawless?!” Gu Fei countered.

“I’ve already said earlier that I placed importance into the mercenary group.”

“What has this got to do with our mercenary group?”

“If Amethyst Rebirth manages to win here, it will subsequently advance the battle strategy of our mercenary group by a huge step,” Young Master Han answered.

Chapter 163 - The Big Strategy

“Tsk!” Gu Fei did not believe Young Master Han’s words, “Don’t act like you meant for this to happen. Were it not for Svelte Dancer’s Teleportation Scroll, we would long die to that spell bombardment that you have set up.”

“Is that so?” Young Master Han drawled in his usual self-centered mannerism that seemed to be asking for a beating from others.

The glass in Gu Fei’s hand would already shatter if it were not for the fact that he was a Mage with low Strength. Do your best! Control yourself! Gu Fei thought to himself just like how Stephen Chow did it when he was facing that rough sea in the opening scene of King of Comedy.

“Anyway, the situation now isn’t too bad,” Young Master Han looked at the time once more, asking, “Can Svelte Dancer get through this alone?”

“Of course!” Gu Fei nodded his head, “You’re not the only one who considered the issue of time. With Svelte Dancer’s capabilities, lasting until the match’s end won’t be a problem.”

“Capability? Is a Teleportation Scroll considered a capability now?”

Gu Fei did not answer his question. Pausing for a moment, he remarked, “It’s very boring sitting here and waiting.”

“I’m sure it wouldn’t be boring if War Without Wounds or Royal God Call was here instead,” Young Master Han said.

Gu Fei thought about it and honestly nodded his head, “I completely agree.”

A period of silence descended before Gu Fei finally asked, “Did you purposely strategize against Carouse?”

“Not at the start, but it became like that after I died,” Young Master Han answered.

“Why not from the start?” Gu Fei pressed on.

“Besides you and Svelte Dancer, the other members of your guild can totally be ignored. Although you two have fast movement speed, Carouse’s number and the long match duration would give us ample time to exert pressure all over the map to the point that neither you nor Svelte Dancer could escape,” Young Master Han reasoned, adding, “But after seeing Svelte Dancer’s Teleportation Scroll, I changed my mind and helped you two to achieve victory instead.”

“Oh?”

“That’s why I exaggerated about you and Svelte Dancer’s capabilities, suggesting that we proceed with caution by setting a defensive formation. I was planning to tell you my solution on how to deal with them in the final ten minutes, yet you were hot-headed enough to strong-arm your way to their defensive line half an hour earlier,” Young Master Han remarked expressionlessly.

“There you go deciding things on your own again! If we couldn’t hold on till the final ten minutes, wouldn’t your planning be for naught?” Gu Fei asked.

“Is it still my responsibility if you all couldn’t last till the final ten minutes?” Young Master Han countered.

Gu Fei choked, “Why couldn’t you have said something sooner?”

“Didn’t I say so before? My defense is perfect that even I have not found the method to break it yet. That was me telling you to stay put and not try anything fancy against my perfectly designed plan,” Young Master Han answered.

“Sorry about that! The way how your narcissism worked into your speech made me assume that you were just being sarcastic,” Gu Fei remarked dryly.

Young Master Han shook his head sadly, “Look at the cumbersome plan that you have come up with. Success will just mean that your luck isn’t terrible.”

Gu Fei could only laugh bitterly at his comment.

The two waited in silence inside the room for the match to end.

Half an hour later, Gu Fei received a message from Svelte Dancer: “Where are you?! We’ve won! WA HA HA HA HA! I AM REALLY TOO OP!”

Gu Fei happily replied to her message with one word, “Wonderful!”

Young Master Han furrowed his brows while he was peeking at Gu Fei’s messages from the sidelines. After a while, he waved his hands off dismissively, “How noisy.”

“Isn’t anyone going to trouble you?” Gu Fei asked as he drank his liquor. How he wished someone would rush here to give Young Master Han a good thrashing! Gu Fei could do it himself, but with everyone’s familiarity with one another, he felt uncomfortable doing the beating himself.

Young Master Han shook his head, “I don’t know.” He had long muted the guild channel.

Not too long after, a cacophony of noises echoed from outside the room and a woman’s voice boomed above the din, “Drinks are on me for everyone who’s currently here!”

Cheering echoed all over Ray’s Bar as Gu Fei and Young Master Han looked at each other’s eyes and called out in unison, “Ray!”

Ray hurriedly appeared before the two men.

“Is someone outside treating a round?” Young Master Han asked.

Ray nodded his head.

“Get me two bottles of your most expensive liquor,” Young Master Han ordered.

Ray gave a slight smile as he left the room.

“I’ve drunk that before, and it’s really not bad!” Gu Fei excitedly commented.

Young Master Han’s expression instantly turned frigid, “Need I remind you on how you could afford to drink that kind of liquor?”

Gu Fei hurriedly shut his trap. Ray quickly brought their drinks over. Because it was on someone else’s tab, the whole bar began to carouse to their heart’s content. Ray was immensely busy right now and said just two perfunctory words before placing the bottles of liquor down and leaving.

“Ah!” Gazing upon the bottle, Young Master Han radiated with a rarely seen happiness and swiftly poured himself a glass. Although Gu Fei was not that into drinking, he did not want to waste this chance to taste such a good quality liquor that the game had priced at 120 gold coins per bottle and also quickly poured himself a full glass.

Of course, those people who had rushed into the bar were none other than the ladies of Amethyst Rebirth. They could hardly believe themselves that they had won a match against the second largest guild in Yunduan City, Carouse. In their euphoria, they had temporarily abandoned their inhibitions and were openly tittering in the bar. The bar patrons inquired about the reason for this generous treat and could hardly believe their ears as well when they heard about the outcome of Amethyst Rebirth and Carouse’s match.

Svelte Dancer had accomplished a great feat indeed, with how she had to spend the last half of an hour alone against six hundred players. Outside the room, she was gamely telling everybody how she had managed to hide from the pursuit of over six hundred players. A look of realization dawned on Young Master Han as he said to Gu Fei, “Now I know why you didn’t choose to attack at the very last minute. Turns out you were purposefully leaving that

half an hour for her so that she could be seen as the one contributing the most.”

Gu Fei smiled as he raised his glass, “Drink your liquor.”

Young Master Han emptied the glass with one gulp and sighed, “I don’t even feel like I’ve taken advantage of the situation drinking this liquor. I’ve earned it.”

Gu Fei chuckled. That was when the chattering outside suddenly subsided, cumulating into silence. In the next moment, Gu Fei heard July say, “Ah, it’s the gentlemen of Carouse. Is something the matter?”

“Are they looking for trouble?” Gu Fei frowned, his hand already reaching into his dimensional pocket for his sword.

“Don’t worry,” Young Master Han assured, “Brave Surge isn’t that sort of guy.”

The two then heard Brave Surge answer July’s question, “Can I know where is that male Mage of your guild? I’m quite interested in him, so I am hoping to get to know him a bit.”

“He’s not here,” July curtly replied.

“Oh...” Brave Surge had eyes of his own; a quick inspection of the bar and he indeed did not see a trace of Gu Fei. “Can you tell me how to contact him?”

“In that case, I’ll relay your message and let him decide!” July answered crisply.

“Thank you!” Brave Surge answered as he brought his men and left the premises.

The ladies all sighed in relief. Everyone had originally thought that Carouse’s men felt cheated off of their win and wanted to regain a bit of face on the spot.

“Hearing what the Carouse’s guild leader was saying, it seems that he wishes to headhunt Miles?” The ladies began to discuss this

among themselves.

They could tell how mighty Gu Fei was after being with him in several guild matches, and a man of his caliber certainly seemed like someone that large guilds would fight over for. Gu Fei was different from Svelte Dancer. While she was a top-class expert herself, her mentality complemented the other ladies. She was here for a good time and did not harbor thoughts of tyrannizing or contending for the 'throne' of being number one. That was why she could be happy in a small guild and why her own mercenary group could be disbanded at the drop of a hat.

As for Gu Fei... None of the ladies could get a read of his thoughts, as they were not even close to him to begin with. Moreover, he had only joined the guild due to a misunderstanding and had mentioned before that he would leave the guild sooner or later.

The relationship between Gu Fei and these ladies was not especially deep, nor did they care if he was an expert or a noob. But as time went on, they had gotten used to having someone like him in the guild, so they felt somewhat saddened at the possibility of this status quo changing.

The atmosphere in the bar suddenly became quite sullen.

Young Master Han ridiculed, "Well what do you know... These ladies actually have quite a bit of a soft spot for you."

Gu Fei smiled but did not say a word. It was not exactly a bad thing for people to have a soft spot for him.

The third round of the PvP event had ended as thus. Yunduan City once more had a hot topic to discuss and its content was the defeat of Carouse at the hands of Amethyst Rebirth. The tip off this time was different from that of Cloud Herder mercenary group's, as the person who had leaked this information was from neither side. The original poster claimed that he had conducted a very thorough interview with both parties, yet the post did not mention

the existence of the Mage Gu Fei. The post emphasized merely on the overwhelming strength of Svelte Dancer, one of the Five Unyielding Experts as well as the existence of a Teleportation Scroll.

This information did not exactly have a huge impact on the players outside Yunduan City, but it created huge waves to the ones within Yunduan City. Before, it was Cloud Herder mercenary group with its seventy or so members; now, it was Carouse with its over seven hundred members. This sort of ‘dragging the time out’ stratagem was simply too scary. Every large guild and mercenary group reacted appropriately, heavily researching a method to crack this stratagem.

“Heh... Carouse lives up to its name. The impact of their defeat is more intense than Crowd Herder’s defeat to us,” Young Master Han nodded his head in satisfaction.

“It’s Cloud Herder,” Brother Assist corrected.

“It’s all in the past, so why bother? I can’t wait to see what sort of strategy would our new foe come up with,” Young Master Han laughed coldly.

The rest of Young Master’s Elite took a copy each of the materials Brother Assist had gathered for today’s opposing mercenary group. Gu Fei swept through the data once and laughed, “This mercenary group we are facing for today will definitely be unaffected by whatever strategy you come up with.”

“Oh? Is there someone in that group who can see through my intentions?” Young Master Han asked as he checked the report that Brother Assist had prepared.

Young Master’s Elite mercenary group’s fourth round opponent: level 1 Amethyst mercenary group with twenty members. Besides the level 41 Thief Svelte Dancer, no one else had reached level 40.

Chapter 164 - Pointless Effort

Amethyst mercenary group was established right before the mercenary PvP tournament started, so it had yet to reach level 2. Since each level added another twenty members to the mercenary group member limit, all of Amethyst Rebirth's fifty plus ladies could not join the mercenary group even if they wanted to.

Young Master Han swept his gaze through the report and dismissively tossed it back onto the table, "I don't see how these women could see through my intentions."

Gu Fei smiled and simply replied, "It's not 'see through', but 'disregard'. Get it? They have always been ignoring any sort of strategy."

"The expert realm!" Brother Assist chuckled, saying, "That is the unchanging yet adaptive realm of the experts."

Out of everyone else, only Sword Demon took the matter seriously and read the information provided carefully. War Without Wounds and Royal God Call were currently competing with each other on who knew more of the listed women in the report. Gu Fei turned his attention over to these two and said, "Compare with me!"

"Scram!" the two said together.

Young Master Han's heart suddenly skipped a beat. Royal God Call and War Without Wounds would lose themselves whenever they met women, while Gu Fei's relationship with the Amethyst Rebirth's women should not be taken lightly either. He suddenly felt uncertain on how these three would perform during the upcoming fight. Did Young Master's Elite finally meet its match? This group of simple-minded ladies would simply ignore all kinds of strategies, after all. Young Master Han turned his gaze toward Brother Assist and Sword Demon. Sword Demon was still wordlessly reading the report while Brother Assist was looking at

Gu Fei, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds with worry etched on his face.

“Hmm... The strength of Amethyst mercenary group may be average, but Svelte Dancer is one of the Five Unyielding Experts. Wearing top-grade equipment all over her body, her strength is certainly OP, so we need to remain cautious,” Brother Assist said.

“Ha ha!” Royal God Call laughed gleefully, “I know fifteen of them, and you only know eleven. You’re getting old, Wounds!”

“M*th*rf*ck*r!” War Without Wounds shredded the report in his displeasure.

Gu Fei did not make a sound by the side. This was because he had just realized that out of the twenty ladies listed, he could only recognize eight of them. Gu Fei felt somewhat ashamed when Royal God Call and War Without Wounds enviously gazed at him, as they were probably thinking that he knew the twenty ladies very well.

Royal God Call took out a fresh set of the report and pointed toward a name, “Nobody can kill this beauty!”

Gu Fei popped his head over and glanced at the name. Grape... Who’s this again? He did not recall her at all even after thinking about the IGN for quite some time.

War Without Wounds also glanced over, “Oh? Are you interested in Grape?”

Royal God Call puffed his chest spiritedly and smiled, “She is beautiful, but more importantly, I think she has feelings for me.”

“Bleh!” War Without Wounds showed his disdain.

“Miles, you better help me in making her notice me more often!” Royal God Call said to Gu Fei. With him being a member of Amethyst Rebirth, the two were thinking that Gu Fei must be closer to the ladies than the two of them since he had plenty of chances to mingle with them.

“I will, I will,” Gu Fei replied as he thought to himself, F*ck! Who the hell is this Grape, anyway? Pulling out the guild tab, he saw that Grape was a level 37 Priest. Gu Fei barely took note of the non-combat job classes, so the only Amethyst Rebirth’s Priest he knew was Luo Luo.

As the three continued to while their time by casually going through the information in the report, the heart of the Priest sitting across them was getting filled with resentment fast. These three men would usually be asleep – if not daydreaming – whenever they had this sort of meeting. Today, the three were quite attentive for a different reason and one already requested for Young Master’s Elite to go easy on a particular lady. It seemed that he should not expect too much from the three for today’s match. Young Master Han finally hated not having an indomitable combat job class; otherwise, he would be able to brutally knock some sense into these three. “Sword Demon, better make your preparation. Looks like it’s gonna be up to you today,” he faintly said this to Sword Demon.

After looking through the information provided, Sword Demon placed the document back onto the table and nodded his head.

Over by the Amethyst Rebirth’s side, the ladies had been feeling excited ever since they found out who they were matched up to this time around. Quite a few of them who had not signed up for the mercenary group were feeling very remorseful right now. Raising the mercenary group’s level was not possible at the moment, and even if they could do so, the participants for the upcoming match had already been set, so the additional members could not participate in it still.

“Ahhhhh!” many of the ladies moaned in dismay. Of course, the reason why these ladies were feeling disappointed was not that they wanted to meet all of Young Master’s Elite’s members, but it was because they wanted to lay eyes on the legendary character: Close Combat Mage 27149. After all, the other members of Young

Master's Elite had long been revealed to these ladies. July and a few others did not leak this information to the guild; instead, Royal God Call and War Without Wounds were the ones who had intentionally 'leaked' this truth to the ladies in hopes of projecting themselves as mighty and glorious individuals. Although the awesomeness of Young Master's Elite that existed in the ladies' hearts was something that the two would often exploit, the two resolutely kept Gu Fei's identity as the Close Combat Mage hidden from them.

The ladies viewed the Close Combat Mage as the most outstanding player in every manner, so Royal God Call and War Without Wounds were positive that they would be unable to 'scavenge' even a bit of the ladies' adoration if they found out the truth about Gu Fei. After working their butts off for so long, the two were naturally unwilling to let Gu Fei take these ladies away from them.

There were many mercenary groups in Yunduan City, so who would have thought that Amethyst would serendipitously meet Young Master's Elite in the mercenary PvP tournament? With this, 27149 would no longer be able to hide his identity from them.

"Ha ha ha ha!" 27149's number one fan, Lie Lie, was of course the most elated by this. "I can finally meet my idol!" she happily declared.

"He he he..." Will-low and Luo Luo laughed dryly together. In Amethyst Rebirth, only the two knew that Gu Fei was Young Master's Elite's Close Combat Mage.

"Hmph! Is that person really that great?" Svelte Dancer asked skeptically. She had only recently joined Amethyst Rebirth and these ladies' most common topic in their conversations was this Close Combat Mage 27149.

All the ladies vigorously nodded their heads: "He is super awesome! He hunted that despicable Thief and dropped his level

by eight!”

“Who is that useless Thief?” Svelte Dancer asked.

“No Smile.”

“Oh, that damn huckster! Don’t let me meet him in person,” Svelte Dancer menacingly wiped her dagger.

“There is still one hour,” some of the ladies excitedly counted the time.

“Hey! This is a match; not a fan meet up session,” Svelte Dancer reminded.

“Of course, I wanna let him see how awesome I am!” Lie Lie bumped her fists together.

Both sides were counting down the time in their respective locations. When the match was only half an hour away, everyone stood up, “Let’s go!” Amethyst mercenary group left the guild house, while Young Master’s Elite mercenary group left Ray’s Bar.

The two locations were near each other. Since both sides were heading toward the same location, they would inadvertently meet along the way. Royal God Call sharpened his eyes. Seeing the ladies walking out from the opposite alleyway, he hurriedly gave a look to War Without Wounds.

War Without Wounds was surprisingly attentive as well, and the two instantly walked up together.

“Miles!” War Without Wounds reached his hand out and patted Gu Fei.

“Eh?” Gu Fei did not dodge that pat as he never thought that War Without Wounds would use his strength to hold him in place and would proceed to push him to the side. Thus, Gu Fei was easily pushed right into a side alley where Royal God Call skulked about.

“What’s the matter?” Gu Fei asked, perplexed.

“The Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies are here!” Royal God Call said in

a hushed tone.

Gu Fei momentarily did not understand what he meant.

“If they see you with us, your identity as 27149 will get exposed!” Royal God Call reminded him.

“Then so be it! It doesn’t really matter at this point...” Gu Fei actually regretted having to hide his other identity. If not for that, those people harboring hatred toward him would have long come to PvP with him. Going through those days without PvP was really tough!

“B*llsh*t! If they find out that you are 27149, we won’t have any game left!” Royal God Call immediately spat out the truth.

Gu Fei could not help but laugh bitterly when he thought of how these two had sworn to July and the other ladies that Gu Fei was not 27149 and was just someone aspiring to be a member of Young Master’s Elite.

“Won’t the babes still find out that it’s Miles once they enter the map?!” War Without Wounds worriedly asked.

“We need to give Miles a makeover! Hold him down!” Royal God Call said to War Without Wounds.

War Without Wounds used one hand to press Gu Fei against that wall.

“Are you two asking for a quick death or something?” Gu Fei emotionlessly stuck his hand into his dimensional pocket. His fellow mercenaries were well aware of how fearsome Gu Fei’s Twin Incineration was, so the two knew that they would surely die if he successfully pulled his sword out. The two hesitated in carrying out their plan as their hearts filled with trepidation. “What do you guys want me to do?!” Gu Fei relented in the end after seeing their pitiful-looking faces.

“Just cover your face, change your attire, and don’t use that sword,” Royal God Call knew that it was useless to force Gu Fei, so

he resorted to pleading instead.

“Fine! I’ll do as you say!” Gu Fei no longer cared whether he was concealing his identity or otherwise. Since they earnestly requested it, he decided to help his fellow brothers-in-arms this one time! With that thought in mind, Gu Fei took off Midnight Spirit Robe and put on the Flaming Robe that he had last worn in Yueye City. He next took out the triangular black cloth he had worn ages ago and covered his face with it, “Will this work?”

The two patted him on his shoulders in satisfaction, “That’s what I call brotherly!”

“You mustn’t pull out Moonlit Nightfalls no matter what,” Royal God Call reminded him once more.

“Hey! Neither of you will purposely go easy in this match, right?” Seeing how these two were acting, Gu Fei could not help but express his concern.

“Don’t worry. We’re not that despicable,” the two said in unison.

Gu Fei sighed deeply in relief, “At least you guys are aware that you’re despicable.”

“You gotta be despicable when it comes to flirting; let me tell you —”

“Scram! You rascal!” Gu Fei waved his hands off to Royal God Call. When he saw that War Without Wounds was about to say something, he quickly interrupted him: “Old men without gravitas can also get away from me.” With that, Gu Fei stalked off.

“Do I really look very old?” War Without Wounds had a crestfallen look on his face as he asked Royal God Call this.

“Not just your appearance, you’re really old. This a young man’s world now,” Royal God Call answered.

“F*ck off!” War Without Wounds picked up Royal God Call and threw him to the side.

Since the three were busying over Gu Fei's identity inside the alley, they all failed to see what was happening outside the alley. Young Master Han, Sword Demon, and Brother Assist continued moving forward and eventually met up with the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies. Both sides knew that they would be fighting in the upcoming match, so they maintained distance from one another as they walked toward the Hall of Mercenaries.

"Hey! Where's Miles! Why isn't he with you guys?!" Svelte Dancer suddenly asked the three men.

"Miles?" All the ladies asked, stunned.

"Don't you girls know? Miles is in the same mercenary group as these guys!"

"They... But they're Young Master's Elite!" the ladies exclaimed stiltedly.

"Eh?"

"Miles is the Mage in Young Master's Elite? The Close Combat Mage?! Fugitive 27149?!" There was uproar among the ladies; only Will-low and Luo Luo stayed by the side with a forced smile on their faces. The ladies exchanged glances as the three men calmly chose to walk forward without talking to any of them.

"Miles is Close Combat Mage 27149?" Lie Lie had the most intense reaction out of all the ladies and tears rolled down her cheeks unabatedly. Ever since that incident by the street, she had stopped talking to Gu Fei altogether. Their relationship had evidently become frigid. Knowing his identity now clearly did not help to change this status at all.

"So it really is him!" July muttered to herself. She had always suspected him, only he had always managed to cover everything up. With the solid evidence this time, all the suspicious points she had detected on him once more became proofs of his other identity.

Only Svelte Dancer did not have any clue at what was going on, “Didn’t you all say that 27149 is a hidden character? Why would he suddenly be Miles?”

“That’s right! Miles can’t even defeat me, so how can he be such a mighty person?” June’s Rain usually took some time before she could make sense of things.

“Miles couldn’t beat you? Are you sure?” Svelte Dancer had fought with Gu Fei side by side many times and she had yet to see anyone survive his spells, be it his AOE attack or his melee attack.

As June’s Rain told Svelte Dancer all the incidents in the past, the other ladies discussed the issue of Gu Fei being 27149, almost forgetting that they were supposed to head to the PvP tournament venue. Finally, the sober Luo Luo and Will-low reminded everyone how much longer they had until the match started.

Over by the Young Master’s Elite’s side, Young Master Han and the two finally met up with Gu Fei, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds in the ‘changing room’. When the three saw Gu Fei’s getup, they expressed their surprise. Young Master Han asked, “Just what are you up to this time?”

“Ask those two,” Gu Fei glumly replied.

The two happily told them everything. Young Master Han laughed coldly by the side as he patiently listened to their recount. Once they were done, he slowly and methodically dropped the other shoe on the two men, “Don’t busy yourselves with things that don’t matter. They already know Miles’ other identity.”

“What?! How can that be?!” The two leaped up in their surprise.

“When Svelte Dancer barged into our meeting that time, she learned that we and Miles are in the same mercenary group,” Brother Assist reminded the two.

“Why would she inexplicably barge in like that?!” War Without Wounds asked, enraged.

Royal God Call disappointedly slapped himself, “It’s my fault for being so greedy!” Had he not been greedy and traded his Windchaser’s Boots away to Svelte Dancer, she would not have excitedly run into their meeting and flaunt it to Gu Fei, which meant that no one would have found out Gu Fei’s other identity.

“Hmm... Looks like wanting both wealth and love isn’t a simple thing,” Brother Assist voiced out his epiphany about life.

“Since that’s the case, I don’t need this anymore!” Gu Fei eagerly took the black cloth off his face.

Royal God Call felt hurt, while War Without Wounds was despondent.

As Gu Fei busied himself with changing his attire once more and readying his Moonlit Nightfalls, he failed to notice that the Amethyst Rebirth’s guild channel was being bombarded with messages. The ladies were animatedly discussing the matter of Gu Fei being the Close Combat Mage 27149. Gu Fei was clearly online, yet he did not say a peep.

“Does this guy ever look at the guild channel?” a lady asked earnestly.

“He kept us in the dark for so long!” another lady sighed.

“We must get Miles’ signature when we head back!” a diehard fan declared.

“He he. So it turns out that we’re already acquainted with 27149 and have long seen his face. It’s not really a loss even if we don’t participate in the mercenary PvP tournament!” Some of the ladies who had been fretting over this matter no longer felt very dejected.

Gu Fei did not show himself on the guild channel, so some of the ladies decided to send him messages directly.

“Hey! Your identity has been exposed!” Will-low had the good sense to be worried for Gu Fei.

“Do you have anything else to say now?” July was quite resentful of Gu Fei denying her allegations time after time.

“Sigh... Looks like I won’t be the only one teasing you after this,” Luo Luo did not intend to reveal Gu Fei’s identity, probably for the same reason Royal God Call and War Without Wounds had chosen not to do so.

“Hmph! You sure hid it well!” Even Svelte Dancer had something to say.

“Miles, how can you be 27149?” June’s Rain had still not gotten there yet!

As for the guild’s Mages, they were inquiring about how Gu Fei had managed to become a close combat Mage. Gu Fei’s hands were full trying to answer them, and he felt very troubled by this. He finally realized the many advantages of hiding his identity. “Just come and kill me already...” was what Gu Fei truly wanted to say to them.

This carried on for quite some time. Gu Fei tried to reply to quite a few of them yet new messages kept on coming in. The match timer started as the scene changed. The players were all teleported into the PvP arena, but Gu Fei’s message notification never stopped pinging. Young Master Han swept his gaze over to the three dejected mercenaries of his and did not bother with them afterward. Looking around and seeing a vantage point, he promptly told Sword Demon and Brother Assist, “Let’s head over there and have a look.”

The two nodded their heads in agreement. All three headed off toward the high ground as Brother Assist worriedly said, “If those three don’t put in any effort, this match is gonna be a little troublesome!” Just as he said this, Gu Fei caught up to them. With a hand tugging his sleeve and killing intent emanating from him, he asked, “Are we starting already? Why didn’t you call for me?!”

Chapter 165 - A Ditch

Young Master Han, Sword Demon, and Brother Assist turned around to stare at Gu Fei. Behind him, Royal God Call and War Without Wounds were listlessly walking over as well.

“Can you really do this without hesitation?” Brother Assist asked Gu Fei, saying, “You’re in the same guild as them, after all.”

“He he!” Gu Fei chuckled, “Why don’t you ask Young Master how he died.”

Young Master Han rolled his eyes, visibly annoyed.

“But it’s a group of ladies, and each of them is as pretty as a flower!” Brother Assist said instead.

Gu Fei coughed, “Young Master doesn’t lose to them in that aspect, either.”

Brother Assist and Sword Demon froze in place before they swept their eyes over to Young Master Han and Gu Fei, heading to the side to snigger.

Young Master Han’s fists were tightly clenched, but Gu Fei quickly stopped anything from happening by widening his steps and waving the sword in his hand, “Let’s go! Let’s go!” With that, he used his fast movement speed to temporarily keep his distance from Young Master Han.

Gu Fei was the first to climb up the peak, looking far across the map. Only twenty-six players were participating in this match so the PvP arena’s size was not large, allowing Gu Fei to quickly discover the ladies’ figures. The other five men reached the peak shortly after, gazing over to the ladies’ direction as well. The ladies were gathered together and were not making a move. It was very different from their usual action of running all over the place without any specific direction.

“What’s the matter with them? Are they not coming over? What

are they doing all gathered together?” Brother Assist asked.

“Chatting!” Gu Fei replied with a tinge of annoyance in his voice.

“How do you know that?” Brother Assist asked.

“My message notification is about to make me deaf...” Gu Fei sighed in frustration. He had yet to open the guild channel, but he was already busy just by replying to all the ladies’ private messages. Twenty enemies were what this match pitted against Young Master’s Elite, yet Gu Fei had to pretty much handle the entire Amethyst Rebirth’s inquisitiveness by himself. Their gossiping nature was as mighty as Gu Fei’s fighting prowess. Furthermore, he had to deal with fifty of such foes – truly a crazy task.

Meanwhile, War Without Wounds seemed to have aged by ten years and Royal God Call repeatedly muttered to himself, “Grape... My Grape....”

Gu Fei could barely handle all the messages being sent to him, but the two men’s brokenhearted expression made him want to comfort them: “Hey, you two. Don’t feel so down. They are only a little curious about me, that’s all.”

“Every relationship begins with a little bit of curiosity,” War Without Wounds said with a heavy heart.

“And their curiosity toward you is definitely not just a little bit,” Royal God Call quipped.

“We’re finished...” War Without Wounds and Royal God Call looked at each other, a miserable smile forming on their faces.

Gu Fei was speechless....

“Are we still fighting this match or what?!” Young Master Han bellowed.

“Let’s fight, let’s fight! Let us properly bring our chapter to a close with this break up,” Royal God Call stroked his bow.

War Without Wounds patted his back, “This world is truly lonely. It’s a good thing you and me are brothers-in-arms.”

Royal God Call paused for a moment before saying, “I think you should stop treating me as such! Honestly speaking, we don’t share a common language, and there are at least three or four generation gaps between us. It isn’t your fault, though. Just you being ancient —”

When War Without Wounds grabbed and tossed Royal God Call down the hilltop, the other three men sighed in relief, “The world is finally quiet again.”

“Get down here! I’ll have a deathmatch with you!” Royal God Call who had been tossed down the hillside was now covered in dirt. Did people not say that friends were scarier than enemies? No one would be guarded against a friend patting his or her back. If even Gu Fei suffered from War Without Wounds’ ways, Royal God Call would naturally not be an exception.

That was how the two started cursing at each other, with one up the hill and the other by the foot of it. All the while, Gu Fei was crazily sending out messages. Young Master Han, Brother Assist, and Sword Demon exchanged looks and sighed, “Seems like it is still up to us, three.”

“Talk to them some more; I guess that can be considered as you diverting their attention,” Young Master Han instructed Gu Fei as the three began to descend from the hill and head toward the ladies’ spawn point.

“Hey! Wait for me!” Gu Fei chased after them as he kept replying to the ladies’ messages. War Without Wounds also went down the hilltop, cursing Royal God Call all the way. In Young Master Han and the other two’s eyes, the three men were no more than walking sacks of meat.

“We’ll talk more after this match!” Gu Fei sent this reply a hundred times first before the ladies finally stopped sending him

private messages. He heaved a huge sigh of relief and wiped the sweat off his forehead, "It's finally over."

Royal God Call and War Without Wounds were still arguing with each other as they lamented their poor fortune. One moment they were bickering, the next moment they were commiserating with each other. Gu Fei finally regained his sanity after finishing his task of replying to all the ladies' messages. He could not stand to hear what the two were telling each other, so he hurriedly asked on the mercenary channel for the whereabouts of Young Master Han and the other two who had gone ahead first, swiftly making his way toward them.

The ladies are done with their chitchats, so it's probably time for them to move out. With the reckless and wild manner in which they advance, AOE spells are essentially useless in dealing with them... It's better to head over there and slay them one by one. Svelte Dancer will most definitely jump out and block me. It's hard to tell what might happen if that woman takes me on while the rest of the ladies sneak up on me from the sidelines, so I better seize the initiative and finish off Svelte Dancer. As Gu Fei was pondering on what he should do, he saw Brother Assist squatting in a ditch straight ahead. From the way he looked about from time to time, Gu Fei judged that Brother Assist had the potential to join the Forever in Flowers Guild. Gu Fei called out to him, "Brother Assist!"

Brother Assist turned his head back and smiled, "You finished?"

Feeling somewhat awkward to answer his inquiry, Gu Fei simply jumped into the ditch and asked his own question, "What are you doing here? Where are Sword Demon and Young Master Han?"

"They found somewhere else to stage an ambush," Brother Assist answered.

"Where?" Gu Fei peeked from the ditch and stealthily looked

around.

Brother Assist poked his head out as well and pointed at a nearby mound with his hand, “Young Master’s there! I don’t know where Sword Demon went.”

“How are we fighting them?” Gu Fei asked.

“Their movement is a mess, so we’ll take care of them one by one when they fall behind!” Brother Assist.

Gu Fei smiled as he said, “That’s the way they are.”

“Ah! Someone’s coming!” Brother Assist’s eyes sharpened as he whispered this, quickly pulling Gu Fei down to hide once more.

However, someone among the ladies had pretty good eyesight and she exclaimed, “Ah! There are two heads over by that ditch!”

Gu Fei and Brother Assist exchanged looks. “How did she notice us from over there?!” Gu Fei asked, shocked.

“Let’s just move to another spot quickly. The other ladies will probably be coming here very soon!” Brother Assist suggested.

“But it’s good that they are coming over here!” Gu Fei pulled out his sword.

“Oh...” Brother Assist nodded his head in realization. Taking out his scepter, he was about to bless Gu Fei when he paused and asked, “Which of your stats should I boost?”

“Speed!” Gu Fei automatically replied.

“I don’t have that yet,” Brother Assist answered.

“Then what do you have?”

“Health, Strength, Resilience, Intelligence, and Vitality.”

What’s Resilience for?” Gu Fei asked. The term was not part of the six common stats found on a character.

“It increases physical defense.”

“And Vitality? Does it boost the Spirit stat?”

“No, that boosts magic defense.”

“Oh, can’t you just give me everything?” Gu Fei asked. He had received a Priest’s Heal before, but he had never gotten a Knight’s Blessing yet.

“Nope,” Brother Assist answered.

“I guess you can just add—f*ck! Dodge quickly!” Gu Fei did not get to finish his words as he felt something flash by above his head, signifying that a Mage had just thrown a spell on them.

Gu Fei and Brother Assist would have to climb out of the ditch if they wanted to escape it, yet there was insufficient time to do so right now, so they crouched to the left and right respectively. Gu Fei was confident in his speed, but Brother Assist’s speed worried him. While running onward, he looked backward. Just as he had expected, Brother Assist failed to escape the AOE of the opposing Mage’s Descending Wheel of Flames. Thankfully, it was just a normal flame wheel, so Brother Assist did not get insta-killed.

Gu Fei sighed in relief. It was then that the temperature around him began to rise. A boom rang out as he got struck by a flame wheel as well. Feeling depressed, he straightened himself and asked aloud, “Who threw that?! Could you throw it a little more accurately?!”

With his understanding of the ladies, he believed that this was someone throwing a spell off target, which resulted in it accidentally landing on Gu Fei’s head.

Indeed, a blushing Ice Glaze beyond the ditch cried out, “Ah! I’m so sorry....”

“Xiao Bing? I remember that your accuracy isn’t this bad!” Gu Fei said as he clambered out of the ditch.

Four ladies stood waiting outside the ditch: two Mages, one Priest, and one Warrior. Mages, Priests, and Warriors with normal

stat point distribution had similar speed, so these four players ended up roaming the PvP arena together. This was how the Amethyst Rebirth's members divided themselves into groups and how Gu Fei ended up being paired with Svelte Dancer most of the time when PvPing. After all, nobody else could match their speed in Amethyst Rebirth.

“Uhhh...” Gu Fei did not know to say to them. Usually, he would not need to talk and would just sweep his sword to attack. Since he knew these people, he felt the need to explain himself.

Gu Fei quickly realized that the worry Brother Assist had previously raised was sound; it was indeed very difficult for him to actually attack these ladies. Using Young Master Han as an example was simply inapt. Young Master Han truly deserved a good thrashing, so not a sliver of hesitation had been present when Gu Fei had beaten him up. As for these ladies, Gu Fei needed to mentally prepare himself before he could move against them.

Unexpectedly, the ladies reacted faster than Gu Fei. The Warrior suddenly came back to her senses as she shouted, “Right! Miles is the enemy right now, so quickly attack him!”

“Oh, yeah!” The rest of the ladies also woke up from their daze, and the Mages immediately chanted, “Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!”

Gu Fei did not move from his spot. The ladies' spell-casting was too wild, so he was afraid that he would end up getting hit by their flame wheels if he moved about carelessly. He figured that it was safer to wait until the flame wheels had appeared before moving.

Fire formed in the air. Lifting his head, Gu Fei saw that neither of the flame wheels had missed their mark and dutifully dodged to the side as he raised the sword in his hand, “Fireball! Shoot!”

Chapter 166 - Internal Conflict

Moonlit Nightfalls glowed as a ball of fire formed from its tip before flying toward the four ladies.

“Ahh! Quickly dodge it!” The ladies were thrown into a tizzy. With the current standard of Parallel World’s players, the most basic spell in the Mages’ arsenal, Fireball, was often disregarded by many. Most people would casually knock it away with anything that they had and view the spell as not a big deal even if it hit them.

As for the ladies, they treated Gu Fei’s spells, even Fireball, as something very dangerous. Thus, the four quickly dispersed when they saw the ball of fire heading their way.

Fireball had a tracking ability, yet Gu Fei did not make his spell chase after any of the four ladies and the ball of fire was floating in a straight line instead. Gu Fei had always been using Fireball like how he threw his secret projectiles during his kung fu training session, and he would often throw the spell out by relying on his eyes and calculation instead of on the system’s target lock-on assistance.

“Fireball! Shoot!” Ice Glaze and another Mage made use of the same spell to counter Gu Fei’s. He extended his sword and unhurriedly sliced apart the two balls of fire heading his way, easily dissipating them.

“YA!” The female Warrior lowered her head and sprinted over using Charge. Gu Fei sidestepped to let her pass him and swung hard at the incoming figure with his sword, “Twin Incineration! Incinerate!”

The blade formed a beautiful red arc, yet it cleaved nothing but empty space. The female Warrior was currently standing next to the sword as she said in confusion, “Oh, dear. Did I estimate wrongly for the distance?”

Gu Fei wanted to faint right there and then. The lady Warrior had apparently calculated the distance wrongly with Charge. The lady could simply not reach Gu Fei from where she had activated Charge, so while Gu Fei's sidestep perfectly opened up an opportunity for him to strike her, the lady's poor execution of the skill had rendered his swing useless.

"Let me do it again!" The lady ran back to her original position.

Gu Fei's could do nothing but to hold his sword tightly in hand. Originally, he had wanted to slash at the Warrior right away, but he ended up staring blankly at her retreating figure after hearing what she had just said.

Once back in position, she bent her waist, lowered her head, and raised her sword again. After getting into that posture, she said, "Just wait for a little longer! The skill's cool-down time is about to end."

The other three ladies confidently nodded their heads.

Gu Fei was in tears. Is this a PvP match or a mentoring fight?

"Aye! Here I come!" The female Warrior shouted and rushed forward using Charge once more.

Gu Fei was afraid of her misjudging the distance once more and wasting his effort, so he decisively took a step forward, "Twin Incineration! Incinerate!"

From the perspective of Parallel World's Verdict, no matter how many times a Mage casted Twin Incineration, the spell would be unable to win against the Warrior's Charge skill. However, Gu Fei saw through the skill execution and his forward step essentially dodged the female Warrior's Charge. With his follow-up swing to the opponent's direction, his actions virtually canceled out Verdict.

"Ah! She got him!" Ice Glaze and the other ladies rejoiced, fully assuming that Gu Fei's forward step would make him receive the

full brunt of the Charge skill. In the end, they only saw their guildmate catching fire as she went past Gu Fei and burning until she was nothing but a white light.

“Ah... How is that possible?” The three ladies were left befuddled by what they had just witnessed.

“I’m not gonna go easy on you lot anymore!” Gu Fei flexed his forearm to show them that he was serious.

The three ladies were standing separately, so Gu Fei could not cut down all three with one stroke of his sword. Thus, he threw out a ball of fire and dashed toward one of the ladies’ direction.

A whistling sound stopped Gu Fei’s forward momentum, though. The sound of the traveling arrow gave a vague indication of the Archer’s attack power and speed, and Gu Fei believed that only one Archer present in this match could shoot an arrow of this caliber.

Turning his head over, Gu Fei saw that the ball of fire he had thrown to the female Priest was dissipated by the arrow.

Royal God Call then hurtled over from the arrow’s firing direction and shouted, “Who dares to touch Grape?!”

Oh? Is this lady that Grape? Gu Fei glanced at the Priest and sighed in his heart, saying, “Royal! Look at how much you’ve frightened her.”

Royal God Call hurtled over like a wild sparrow, standing in front of Grape while pointing his bow toward Gu Fei. Before anyone could say anything, he signaled Gu Fei like crazy by winking his eyes and moving his brows.

Gu Fei originally wanted to praise Royal God Call for being able to shoot down his Fireball, yet he lost the will to do so after seeing the latter’s facial gestures. He simply sighed and asked, “What are you trying to do here?”

“I’ll fight whoever that dares to touch Grape!” Royal God Call continued to act the part of a hero saving a damsel in distress.

Before this matter could be settled, War Without Wounds also trampled over. His voice reached Gu Fei ahead of his figure, “Xiao Bing and Xiaoying are under my protection! Anyone who dares to attack them will have to get through me first!”

Xiao Bing naturally meant Ice Glaze, as for Xiaoying, Gu Fei did a quick check of Amethyst Rebirth’s members list. Spotting a Mage by the name of Singing Peach, he reckoned that this lady before him must be her.

War Without Wounds, who had gotten near the ladies, opened his stance and bore the look of someone defending justice. The way the two looked at Gu Fei seemed to suggest that he was the one infringing upon the virtues of the fair maidens before him, angering Gu Fei to the point of speechlessness.

The ladies were of course at a loss at what was happening. Ice Glaze meekly asked, “What is going on?”

“It’s an internal conflict!” Gu Fei huffed.

Royal God Call and War Without Wounds stood their ground firmly, as if what they were doing was logically sound. The three ladies looked at one another, unsure of what to make of the situation that they had found themselves in.

“Since that’s the case,” Gu Fei rolled up his sleeves, saying, “I guess I’ll have to take you two down first.”

Royal God Call cried out, “Do you think it will be that easy?” With that, he fired off an arrow on Homing Projectile toward Gu Fei.

Gu Fei flipped his sword over and knocked the arrow aside as he chanted, “Fireball! Shoot!”

Royal God Call fired off Double Shot instead of dodging; one hit Fireball and the other one flew toward Gu Fei.

Gu Fei rushed toward Royal God Call once he finished casting Fireball, dodging the incoming arrow with a deft twist of his head.

Royal God Call smiled when Gu Fei broke eye contact with him and took that chance to turn tail and run.

F*ck! Gu Fei cursed inwardly. The movement speed Royal God Call currently possessed was comparable to his, so chasing after him would be no different from when he was fighting with Sakurazaka Moony: It would just be a stalemate.

War Without Wounds was trying to twist the situation into one where the ladies would feel indebted to him, so he hurriedly addressed the ladies over by the side, “Run away quickly! Leave him to us two!” Gu Fei had been turned into the villain by the actions of these two idiots.

“Ha ha! Come and get me!” Naturally, Royal God Call knew that Gu Fei would be unable to do anything to him right now, so he delightfully taunted him. He ran toward the ditch and dashingy leaped over. However, Royal God Call disappeared from the surface with a whoosh when he did so.

“What happened?” War Without Wounds asked in shock. Gu Fei, meanwhile, was laughing inside him. Evidently, Brother Assist, who was still hiding inside that ditch, had taken that moment to pull Royal God Call down when the latter was gleefully leaping over the ditch. Brother Assist might not have these experts’ fighting prowess, yet a person in hiding would always have the upper hand when it came to pulling a fast one on others.

Recalling that time when they drank the most expensive liquor on Young Master Han’s tab, Gu Fei had only drunk three glasses while Brother Assist had had a whole bottle after the first glass. He profited the most during that incident, yet Gu Fei took the blame for the whole matter. The deviousness of Brother Assist’s duping tactics could be seen from that move alone.

No matter how powerful an Archer was, he or she would oftentimes be at a disadvantage when it came to melee. At this moment, Royal God Call was being held down in the ditch by

Brother Assist and was no longer a cause for worry.

Gu Fei raised his sword and turned about to close in on War Without Wounds.

War Without Wounds was a Warrior, so he clearly did not have the skill to kite Gu Fei. Thus, he firmly planted his feet to the ground and did not forget to tell the ladies in order to earn more brownie points, “Stand behind me.”

The ladies had long been muddled by the messy predicament they had found themselves in. Hearing War Without Wounds’ words, they meekly hid behind him.

Gu Fei sprinted toward War Without Wounds, as the latter separated his two hands each holding a claymore to his sides.

He has taken the Job Class Advancement to be a Berserker! Gu Fei’s heart tightened. He had since learned from his fight with Foe-herder that the Warrior’s dual-wielded Cyclone was not easy to deal with. Foe-herder was ranked sixth on the Warrior leaderboard, while War Without Wounds was currently ranked third. Besides this, he was also known as the number one Warrior in the entire online gaming community, so his Strength should be much higher than other Warriors.

As all these thoughts were running through Gu Fei’s head, War Without Wounds had already bent low and dropped his swords, taking up a very familiar stance.

Here it comes! Gu Fei cried out in his mind. He did not dare to increase the speed of his forward sprint and chose to halt his steps instead. He then raised his sword in preparation for unleashing an AOE spell to interrupt War Without Wounds’ attack.

Unexpectedly, War Without Wounds lifted the swords from his sides and clasped both in front of him as he lowered his head.

F*ck! Gu Fei was shocked to see War Without Wounds stomping toward him using Charge. He quickly sidestepped to dodge the attack and was about to chant a spell when War Without Wounds suddenly jerked his head up, separated his claymores to his sides, and stopped his forward momentum by twisting his waist to meet Gu Fei head on.

“F*ck!” Gu Fei cried out audibly this time.

Gu Fei did not know how far War Without Wounds’ Charge could reach, but he was positive that the latter had canceled it before reaching the intended distance. His timing for the skill cancelation was nearly impeccable, placing him right before Gu Fei. What was worse was that War Without Wounds had immediately followed this up by unleashing Cyclone on the spot.

A dual-wielded Cyclone had double the effect compared to the usual Cyclone. Using only one hand to take the blow would result in a player taking a gash from the other weapon before being flung outward by the skill’s spinning. Gu Fei had already experienced this before and he could only think of one way to fully block this attack: dual-wield weapons, as well.

Characters without the Dual-wielding Mastery would be unable to deal damage with the weapons in their non-dominant hands, but the Verdict for blocking still existed. When Gu Fei used the sword in his right hand to block the first blow, his left hand also reached into his dimensional pocket for his Sacred Flames of Baptism.

The clashing of metals rang out twice. This was followed by Gu Fei being hurtled outward by the Cyclone’s spinning. His HP was dropping rapidly while mid-air. Although his weapons had managed to block the attacks, his blocking attempts had been judged by Verdict as very weak. Thus, Gu Fei still received a lot of damage from the Cyclone skill.

“This sucks!” Gu Fei sighed in frustration. He might have been

able to take all the damage had he been at full HP. Unfortunately, he had earlier taken damage from Ice Glaze's Descending Wheel of Flames....

...Can Gu Fei survive his impending fall to the ground with how he is currently sailing through the air? Find out next time in the succeeding chapter of Virtual World: Close Combat Mage!

Chapter 167 - A PvP to Decide the Winner

Gu Fei was flung outward by Cyclone with only a sliver of HP, but two beams of holy light unexpectedly enveloped him before he landed on the ground. Gu Fei looked toward the two directions where the Heal had come from and saw a pretty face from each spot. One Heal had come from Young Master Han, while the other one had come from Luo Luo. Clearly, these two Priests did not expect either of them to make an appearance here.

Receiving Heal twice, Gu Fei's HP was no longer in danger of depleting. He lay on the ground and sighed in relief. Meanwhile, War Without Wounds anxiously ran over while shouting, "Do you even cherish your life?!"

What is he even saying?! Gu Fei perplexedly did a kip up, "I don't get what you are trying to say."

War Without Wounds muttered, "Why did you not dodge my Cyclone and forcibly block it?"

"How could I dodge it at that distance?" Gu Fei asked, discontented. He had blocked Cyclone many times in the past and knew that the skill could not be blocked or dodged at such a close range. After all, moving his wrist to block an attack was a lot quicker than moving his entire body.

"I've even slowed it down! I especially left a gap for you to dodge it," War Without Wounds said.

"Is that so?" Gu Fei asked, surprised. Truth be told, he had only concentrated on pulling out his second weapon to block the attack, so he did not notice the actual speed of War Without Wounds' Cyclone. As he tried to recall it at this moment, it did seem as if War Without Wounds had activated his skill slightly slower than usual.

"Didn't you see me wink at you?!" War Without Wounds asked.

“Did you?” Gu Fei was surprised once more. His focus was solely on War Without Wounds’ swords as he had been attempting to block the latter’s Cyclone.

Finished with explaining himself, War Without Wounds boomed, “Now you know my prowess! Leave!” With that, he turned around and gave Ice Glaze and the ladies a soul-stirring look.

At the same moment, the three ladies who managed to catch up to Luo Luo were having a little squabble with her.

“It’s a good thing we arrived in time. Miles nearly died!” June’s Rain said.

“That’s not right! Miles is our enemy right now! Sis Luo Luo, why did you help him?” The other lady was clear of the situation.

“It’s a mistake. Bestowing Heal on him became a habit!” Luo Luo earnestly explained.

Young Master Han smacked his forehead as he stood at a nearby peak; he could really not stand this convoluted scenario any longer.

Gu Fei stood up. Peeling a tangerine and eating each piece, he asked, “So are we still doing this?”

The ladies were at a loss at what was going on as well and they exchanged confused glances with one another. A normal PvP match would have both sides clashing right about now. The ladies were no fools and knew very well what sort of experts the members of Young Master’s Elite were. If they were to get serious, this match would be less of a fight and more of a beating. Gu Fei alone could easily take care of the six of them.

War Without Wounds whispered to Gu Fei, “Don’t make things difficult for your bros. Go into another location and wait a moment before you engage again.”

Gu Fei helplessly glanced over at Young Master Han who was standing atop a hill, only to see the latter’s expressionless face. He

then turned his face toward the ditch, “How’s Royal?”

Brother Assist peeked from the ditch, “Royal said he’s not here.”

“AH!” A depressed wail came from over the ditch, followed by someone singing, “Why am I always the one getting hurt...”, fading away softly as the person got further. While War Without Wounds obviously won quite a few points with the ladies present, Royal God Call lost his face to the point of wanting to bury himself forever inside the ditch. Those who did not know what had truly happened automatically assumed that he had fallen into the ditch in an attempt to kite Gu Fei.

“Oh! Someone fell into that ditch!” At this moment, June’s Rain laughingly pointed at the ditch. “To actually fall into a ditch, what sort of expert is that?”

Brother Assist despondently crawled out of the ditch as he threw a questioning glance at Gu Fei, asking him of what they should do next.

Gu Fei looked toward War Without Wounds and the latter thundered, “Retreat! Retreat now!”

Gu Fei looked again toward Young Master Han, who shrugged his shoulders helplessly and walked down the hill. Sword Demon appeared from the other side and also moved closer to them.

“Retreat! Retreat now!” War Without Wounds repeated his demand with surety this time. Now that the conversation had moved to the mercenary channel, everyone could discuss this matter away from prying eyes and eavesdropping ears.

“What now?” Gu Fei asked.

“Let’s retreat first!” Young Master Han answered.

“That’s right! A gentleman is the one who does chivalrous deeds,” War Without Wounds delightedly added.

Still, the Amethyst Rebirth’s members had opinions of their own.

When June's Rain saw the five men proceeding to leave, she hurriedly called out to them, "Oi! Where are you all off to?"

"We're going to have a group meeting," Gu Fei replied.

Young Master Han looked backward and swept his gaze all over before settling it on Luo Luo. She had previously represented Amethyst Rebirth in hiring his mercenary group. Although she was not the guild leader, she must at least hold sway in it. Thinking of this, Young Master Han addressed her, "Since we're all so familiar with one another, let's make things simple for everyone and end this match in one place in one go."

"Oh? In that case we will need to have a group meeting of our own as well," Luo Luo said.

"The coordinates will be 110,125. We'll be waiting for you ladies there," Young Master Han informed her before bringing his mercenaries in the direction he had just mentioned.

"You're all such bros to me today! Tonight's drinks are on me!" War Without Wounds excitedly said as they went on their way, playfully punching each of them before finally resting his hands across Gu Fei's shoulders and calling him his 'sworn brother'.

Gu Fei struggled out of War Without Wounds' hold for quite some time, yet he was just no match for the latter's Strength. He asked Brother Assist, "Where did Royal run off to?"

Brother Assist indicated with his chin a certain direction. When Gu Fei shifted his gaze over, War Without Wounds' huge head unintentionally blocked his line of sight. Casually nudging his head to the side, Gu Fei finally spotted Royal God Call who was sitting atop a lone tree stump in the middle of an empty clearing, looking utterly miserable.

The five felt amazed by what they were seeing as they walked toward their fellow brother-in-arms. Royal God Call stood up and met the five of them halfway, a look of utter embarrassment

hanging on his face. Although he got dragged into the ditch by Brother Assist, he was still quite aware of how the situation had panned out. War Without Wounds had successfully demonstrated his fighting prowess by sending Gu Fei flying with his Cyclone, while Royal God Call had fallen into a ditch like a loser. His heart was extremely unsettled right now.

Royal God Call looked more and more like a child right now. The five adults did not know what to say in this situation, so they simply consoled him by ruffling his head. Brother Assist even rebuked War Without Wounds, “Look at you; an adult fighting with a child over some chicks!”

Including Royal God Call, the six finally reached the coordinates Young Master Han had given the ladies. The rolling plains here had no forest, mounds, or even Royal God Call’s hated ditches.

“How are we fighting this match?” Gu Fei asked Young Master Han.

“Are you two willing to continue with the match?” Young Master Han instead asked War Without Wounds and Royal God Call.

War Without Wounds chuckled, “We’ve had our fun. It’s time that we get serious!” He had no more demands at this point, especially after managing to show his might to the ladies when he dominated Gu Fei in the fight earlier.

Royal God Call was not resigned to this, but he could only reluctantly agree to fulfill his duties to the group as it truly was time to decide the fate of this match.

“Since all are willing to play their part, there’s no need for any tactic or strategy. Let’s just meet the enemies head on,” Young Master Han said in a relaxed tone.

All nodded their heads. War Without Wounds, who was currently the most energetic out of everyone, consolingly patted Royal God Call’s shoulder, “You can still let the ladies know how

great you are by fighting them well!”

Royal God Call listlessly nodded his head.

They did not have to wait long as the ladies quickly began to trickle in from every direction according to their speed and job classes. Naturally, Svelte Dancer was the first to reach them. “Are all of you here?” she loudly asked Young Master’s Elite.

Gu Fei gave her a wilted look, “Do you not know how to count?”

“Just you wait till I take care of you!” Svelte Dancer bared her teeth, as if she was about to pounce on to Gu Fei and bite him to death.

Amethyst mercenary group had twenty members. Gu Fei killed one off, so only nineteen of them were making their way to the PvP field. Royal God Call shoved off his deadened look with the ladies’ arrival and replaced it with a cutesy smile, waving and greeting all the ladies he was familiar with. War Without Wounds’ confidence skyrocketed after he had injured Gu Fei with his Cyclone earlier, so he refrained from acting familiar with the ladies like what Royal God Call was doing and instead chose to stand coolly by the side. When Royal God Call finished greeting all the ladies, he flashed them a bright smile and said, “It’s time for a real fight, so I hope you won’t blame us for what we are about to do!”

The ladies returned his smile, “You guys can’t fault us, either.”

“Let’s begin if everyone is here!” Young Master Han said faintly.

Both sides stood across each other. Young Master’s Elite stood in a neat row while Amethyst opted for a two-row formation – the Warriors and melee job classes in front and the Archers, Mages, and Priests at the rear. At least, these ladies were aware of such a basic formation.

“Let’s begin! No point in dragging this out, unless you prefer us to make the first move?” Young Master Han spoke in a lackadaisical tone.

“Attack!” War Without Wounds wanted to let the ladies personally experience his might, so he eagerly rushed forward.

The ladies with melee job classes in front calmly spaced themselves out, allowing the Mages and Archers from behind to initiate their attacks on War Without Wounds who was leading the opposing mercenary group’s assault.

The sound of the female Archers’ arrows hitting War Without Wounds’ armor resounded. Young Master Han quickly bestowed Heal on to War Without Wounds, and the latter promptly activated his Charge following this.

“Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!” “Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!” The female Mages deemed that casting AOE spells would not be a waste even if they missed hitting War Without Wounds as his companions were just right behind him.

Being an expert gamer, War Without Wounds would of course not easily receive these spells. He immediately lowered his head following the ladies’ chanting and continued charging forward. Successfully weaving through the ladies’ casted spells, he smashed head-first into them.

The melee job classes immediately surrounded War Without Wounds just like what he wanted. Separating the claymores to his two sides, he prepared to unleash Cyclone.

Behind, Gu Fei took a few steps forward and pointed Moonlit Nightfalls toward the fighting crowd: “Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!”

Chapter 168 - This is not a one-man fight.

At a glance, anyone would think that War Without Wounds had released a skill that created a burning cyclone, since the flames that had spread throughout the ground seemed to sprout from his Cyclone attack, even though the flames were from a spell that Gu Fei had just casted.

The flames seemed to borrow the airflow that Cyclone had created, as Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno swelled with War Without Wounds at its core. The ladies happened to be trying to surround War Without Wounds, so they all ended up being swallowed whole by the raging inferno together with War Without Wounds.

Gu Fei's AOE spell could even insta-kill the skilled players of Carouse, so these ladies who were caught in the resulting conflagration would naturally be killed off instantly as well. All the members of Young Master's Elite only heard the steady ringing of the system notification, as it constantly updated them of the changes in kill points between the two sides. As white light constantly flashed within the sea of flames, Brother Assist could not help but gasp: "This is too OP! I better record this down!"

Amid the red glow, one figure rushed toward Gu Fei at a remarkable speed. Just as expected! Gu Fei cried out internally. Of course, the one who had rushed out of the firestorm was Svelte Dancer. She was currently wearing the equipment that granted 73% fire resistance, which Gu Fei had returned to her after the PvP match with Carouse. Learning that she had such an item, he had already expected her to survive his spell's damage output.

Svelte Dancer rushed toward him as she took off the coat, just like what Gu Fei had done when he 'flew' through Carouse's spell bombardment. Obviously, Svelte Dancer was planning to change her equipment into something that that would increase her Attack Power. With a full-Agility build, just depending on her top-grade

dagger might not be enough to insta-kill her enemies, after all.

“Royal!” Gu Fei shouted. Svelte Dancer’s defense must be really low in that instant when she was taking off her equipment, so Royal God Call’s Attack Power should be enough to insta-kill her.

However, the sound of an arrow in flight did not echo about. Looking backward, Gu Fei saw Royal God Call staring with unflinching eyes at Svelte Dancer as his nose bled incessantly. Svelte Dancer was indeed the mightiest pay-to-win gamer out there; even her undershirt that became visible when she took off her equipment was very unique. It was form-fitting enough to accentuate her body’s curvature. Royal God Call, the impure lecher, was immediately petrified by the sight, his nose unceasingly bleeding. By the time he returned to his senses, Svelte Dancer had already put on her other equipment.

“Really?!” Gu Fei eyed him contemptuously.

Svelte Dancer’s movement speed became even faster now that she had changed her equipment. In the blink of an eye, she was already upon Gu Fei. He lifted his sword and slashed, yet the reaction speed of Svelte Dancer on Fleetfoot was simply inhuman. Changing the angle of her attack, Svelte Dancer let the sword pass as she plunged the dagger in her hand toward Gu Fei. While Gu Fei’s attack was deadly, his defense and HP were just like the average Mages. A simple basic attack from Svelte Dancer was enough to insta-kill him.

A victorious smile spread across Svelte Dancer’s face just as her dagger was about to puncture his skin. It was at this moment that a heavy blow connected to her nape. Svelte Dancer’s action instantly halted as she was forced to stand stock-still.

This... Svelte Dancer felt somewhat bewildered. Despite knowing the skill, she had never been the recipient of it before.

Bludgeon.

Sword Demon's figure appeared at Svelte Dancer's rear. Expressionlessly tossing a wooden baton to his side, he took out Frost Memories. The dagger's Attack Power had already become quite average in the current stage of the game, yet Sword Demon was having a hard time finding a better replacement for it due to the weapon's OP additional traits.

Gu Fei smiled at the surprised Svelte Dancer. "This is a group PvP, so why are you treating it like a duel?" With that said, he flipped his sword upward: "Twin Incineration! Incinerate!"

To prevent any accidents, Sword Demon also backstabbed Svelte Dancer with Frost Memories. With frontal and rear attacks, Svelte Dancer could only unwillingly resign herself to her fate as her body turned into a stream of white light.

As the system calculated the final score, Gu Fei swept his eyes through the PvP arena and saw that Svelte Dancer's coat had been haphazardly thrown to the ground. "She's so wasteful!" Gu Fei muttered. He then picked the coat up using his sword and settled it on his shoulder just as the system announced the final score. Young Master's Elite decimated the entire Amethyst, yet the group did not get a 'perfect' score as it had one casualty.

White lights engulfed the five men and teleported them out of the PvP arena and into the square by the Hall of Mercenaries.

The ladies were nearby when those five appeared just outside the teleportation array, and they stared resentfully at Gu Fei. It seemed that they were a little hurt by how he had shown no mercy when he was insta-killing them with that one spell.

Svelte Dancer glared at him with short, quick breaths. Clearly, she was dissatisfied by Sword Demon's ambush.

Gu Fei was unfazed by this and merely threw the coat over to her, "Don't you want your coat anymore?"

Svelte Dancer's expression slightly eased with the recovery of her

expensive item, “Hmph! There’s still some conscience left in you, I’ll give you that.”

“It’s a competition, so I hafta do my best. Don’t you all agree?” Gu Fei called out to the rest of the ladies.

“Tsk!” All the ladies looked at Gu Fei with derision as they dispersed.

Royal God Call and War Without Wounds were ecstatic beyond belief. Gu Fei’s image to the ladies was not so high and mighty, after all. Brother Assist, being the pseudo-philosopher that he was, drew a moral lesson from this scene, “‘Never meet your hero.’ This expression holds plenty of truth.”

The mercenary group’s match ended faster than usual, so quite a long time was left before the guild versus guild tournament would begin. All of them surrounded War Without Wounds, “You mentioned you’re treating us to a round of drinks?”

War Without Wounds’ smile disappeared as he stared at Gu Fei, “What happened just now? Give me an explanation.”

Gu Fei had insta-killed War Without Wounds along with the ladies in the last skirmish. “I slowed my incantation to allow you to dodge my spell!” he fibbed.

“Did you really?” War Without Wounds asked, skeptical.

“Did you not see me wink at you?!” Gu Fei asked back, feigning surprise.

“Really?!” War Without Wounds’ pitch rose an octave.

“You can ask the rest,” Gu Fei wordlessly asked for the others’ support. The others automatically nodded their heads in agreement.

“Oh!” War Without Wounds finally believed him and was once more in high spirits. “Let’s go drinking, then! It’s my treat!”

“Wait a sec!” Royal God Call suddenly shouted.

Everyone thought at first that Royal God Call was up to no good, yet his voice soon quivered in excitement, “I – I’ve received a Special Reward!”

“Ahhh!” everyone exclaimed in surprised. Special Reward was randomly awarded by the system to anyone who had attained a win in the PvP event and would directly sent it into the selected player’s dimensional pocket. The system had stated that the chances of being rewarded would increase the further participants went into the PvP tournament. Today’s match was only the fourth round of the PvP tournament and, based on the players’ discussion over the forums, the chances of being given Special Reward were extremely low. Royal God Call was a truly lucky fellow to be awarded with it now.

“What item is it?” everyone asked anxiously.

Royal God Call carefully reached into his dimensional pocket and took it out slowly. It was a skill scroll.

“Permanent or one-time use?” Brother Assist asked. While both were scrolls, the difference in their value was similar the difference between day and night.

“Permanent!” Royal God Call answered gingerly.

“Wow...” all expressed their amazement.

However, Royal God Call’s expression drastically changed when he rolled open the scroll and checked the printed words over. It was as if he had ingested a ten-thousand-year-old poison as he furiously bellowed, “ARE YOU KIDDING ME?! A MAGE SKILL SCROLL?! System, are you blind?! Can’t you see that I’m no Mage, but an ARCHER?!” He forlornly cursed the heavens....

Brother Assist once more philosophized, “A thin line separates heaven and hell. Yet another adage that is true.”

“Here! Take it Miles!” Royal God Call languidly handed the scroll over to Gu Fei after expressing his vexation fully.

Everyone, including the game noob Gu Fei, felt absolutely shocked by his action. The value of a permanent skill scroll was beyond exceptional. Even if Royal God Call could not use it, he could at least fetch a hefty price for it at the Trade Exchange or Auction House. Knowing of this fact, he promptly returned the scroll to Royal God Call, “You should go sell it.”

“Sell, your *ss! Just take the scroll since you can use it!” Royal God Call tossed it back to Gu Fei.

“The system has boldly given you a mage skill scroll, so there might be a Mage out there that has gotten an archer skill scroll. You should hold on to this and swap it with that person!” Gu Fei tossed the scroll over to Royal God Call once more.

The online gaming expert Royal God Call had of course thought of such a possibility, but venting his frustration had been the only thing on his mind just then. Since Gu Fei had helped him a lot in these past few days, tossing the scroll to Gu Fei had seemed like a good deed that could make him feel better about himself and ease the frustration a little. Now that the rush of emotions he had felt calmed, he began to somewhat regret his impulsive action.

“You guys are really too brotherly!” War Without Wounds expressed his admiration. A really expensive item was forcefully being gifted by one and was solemnly being rejected by another. He felt that the two’s upright character deserved his praise.

In the next instant, however, everyone heard Gu Fei honestly admit, “I can’t use that scroll.”

“What?” everyone asked, shocked.

“It said I don’t have lightning magic,” Gu Fei explained.

So Miles has tried using the scroll upon receiving it! everyone realized this truth.

“Does this mean that one needs to be a Lightning Mage before he or she can use the scroll?” Brother Assist asked.

“Seems about right. But I want to advance toward a Water Mage. It is very useful to have the ability to reduce the enemies’ speed,” Gu Fei replied. He was very resentful toward those players who had a faster speed than him as well as those who could kite him.

“Royal’s dream of having a dual-job-class character through the use of skill scrolls isn’t possible, it seems!” Brother Assist sighed.

All nodded their heads in agreement.

“Since that’s the case, I guess I’ll hold on to it and see if anyone is willing to trade for it.” With this kind of development, Royal God Call felt at ease at taking the skill scroll back.

“Head over to the trade forums and put up a post. See if anyone is amenable to such an exchange,” Brother Assist suggested.

“Mhm-mhm!” Royal God Call nodded his head in agreement. He was also an old hand at this, so Brother Assist did not really need to point this out to him.

“We’ve been discussing this for so long, but just what skill does the scroll give, anyway?” Brother Assist asked.

“Electric Wall,” Royal God Call replied.

“The name sounds boring,” Gu Fei sighed. He preferred instant-cast spells, such as Twin Incineration, since they could be used with his kung fu.

“Tsk! Tsk!” The rest of them exclaimed, “Take the scroll out and let us see it again!”

“Oi! Are we drinking or not?!” Young Master Han asked impatiently.

Chapter 169 - Black Clothed, Masked Man

The six made their way over to Ray's Bar.

Not only did War Without Wounds gain quite a lot of face in front of the ladies during Young Master's Elite's match with Amethyst, he also learned that Gu Fei's presence in the guild was not as worrisome as what he and Royal God Call had visualized. Thus, War Without Wounds was currently in an exceptionally good mood.

As for Royal God Call, he was bitter that he had not been able to do the same as War Without Wounds and had only made a fool of himself by falling into a ditch, but the permanent skill scroll – although it was meant for a Lightning Mage – he had obtained helped ease his mood a bit. Moreover, he shared the same sentiment with War Without Wounds regarding the discovery of Gu Fei's place in the ladies' hearts. All in all, he felt somewhat consoled by everything that that had happened.

As for the other four men, their mercenary group winning another match and someone treating them to a round of drinks were enough to make them happy.

In summary, their current drinking session was a tremendously exuberant affair.

However, Gu Fei was more reserved with his drinking, as he had another guild match to participate later. From Sword Demon's past experience, all knew that getting drunk was possible in-game, but the others did not seem to be bothered by their upcoming matches and were drinking to their hearts' content. Gu Fei felt somewhat jealous of this, as it seemed that life in a large guild was pretty good with the others not needing to bear so much responsibility. This was not the case for him, though, since Amethyst Rebirth would automatically lose 50% of its combat might if he drank himself into stupor.

Only half an hour was left until the match began, yet no one seemed to have any intention of leaving and all were even getting into the drinking session more.

Gu Fei kindly reminded everyone, “Guys, the guild match is about to start.” Now that they were in the fourth round of the guild versus guild tournament and the various guilds had been halved three times over, the remaining guilds no longer needed to queue and wait for their turn to use the teleportation array and only had to take note of the time in order to not be late.

Brother Assist and Sword Demon did not react to his reminder since they were not part of any guilds.

Upon hearing that, Young Master Han raised a glass to his lips while glaring intently at Gu Fei. Gu Fei’s heart thumped faster as he suddenly recalled that he was the one who had personally eliminated Young Master Han’s guild yesterday.

Gazing at the next person, War Without Wounds said to him, “My guild has been eliminated long ago!” War Without Wounds’ guild was called Home of the Warriors, and it was more like a club for aficionados. The guild’s size was not large and its job class composition was extreme imbalanced. The members lacked ambition, too. In short, they possessed all the traits that contributed to an incompetent guild and none of the qualities that was essential for a strong guild. Without someone like Gu Fei or Svelte Dancer who had monstrous PvP prowess to help around, Home of the Warriors was immediately eliminated from the guild versus guild tournament in the second round by a second-rate guild.

The last one was Royal God Call, who was currently calculating inside what he could get out of the skill scroll reward he had gotten. “Royal, are you not going to participate in a guild match?” Gu Fei asked.

Royal God Call was smiling smugly at Gu Fei’s inquiry, indicating

that losing one person was not that big of a deal for a guild the size of Traversing Four Seas.

“Your luck is pretty good today. Perhaps, you can get another skill scroll?” Gu Fei cajoled.

Royal God Call immediately got up, “Let’s go!”

The ladies of Amethyst Rebirth were starting to call for Gu Fei. Despite their method of fighting not changing in any way, the guild members would always gather thirty minutes prior to the match’s start for July’s introduction of the opposing guild. The ladies believed that knowing the opponents would better increase their chances of winning, yet they never gained any deep understanding from the not-so-detailed report of July. In fact, they were usually more focused on how pleasant-sounding the names of their upcoming opponents were than on how to properly deal with the opponents.

Gu Fei hurriedly entered the teleportation array. Upon his arrival to the ‘changing room’, all the fifty ladies glared daggers at Gu Fei in unison, obviously still holding grudges at how harsh he had treated them during their last PvP match. “Hey!” he casually greeted them and proceeded to lay low in a corner.

July began to introduce the opposing guild for today’s match: “Level 4 Cloud Herder Guild with five hundred members. The guild leader is a Warrior called Foe-herder who is pretty high up on the Warrior leaderboard.”

“Eh...” As Gu Fei was thinking that the name sounded familiar, July continued, “Something I must mention is that Cloud Herder Guild has a mercenary group. It is the same one that lost to Young Master’s Elite. Everyone knows about this, right?”

All the ladies said, “Oh” before shifting their gazes toward Gu Fei who merely smiled.

“I hope comrade Miles would treat them as viciously as he

treated us earlier,” July said with a straight face.

“Of course! I treat my enemies as cold as a winter’s day,” Gu Fei replied.

“Does that mean that you treat your companions as warm as a summer’s day? Let’s see you do that, then,” Luo Luo remarked.

“Carry on with the report, please,” Gu Fei simply said.

As the guild leader, July tactfully refrained from joining Luo Luo and the ladies into teasing Gu Fei and instead chose to continue presenting the information about the Cloud Herder Guild’s high-level members and job class composition. July’s report simply could not hold a candle to Brother Assist’s detailed report, which also pointed out the unique individuals to be wary of. Still, she managed to cover a lot of details.

Unexpectedly, the opposing guild’s PvP participants remained at fifty even as the match was about to begin in five minutes. The ladies found this to be very strange. When everyone was teleported into the PvP arena, the five-hundred-strong Cloud Herder Guild still only had fifty men present; instead, Amethyst Rebirth was the one that had hit fifty-one with the inclusion of Gu Fei.

“Just what is up with Cloud Herder?” The ladies discussed the perplexing matter among themselves.

Gu Fei meanwhile was clear on why this had happened, immediately understanding what Young Master Han meant with affecting the large-scale PvP with his strategy.

Cloud Herder Guild only sent out fifty men, not because its four hundred fifty men were absent but because it had intended this. The reason behind this was that Cloud Herder’s men were fearful of the small groups and guilds’ fighting style that had been dubbed on the forums as the ‘Huge Kite’. Cloud Herder’s mercenary group had fallen under such a strategy before. Since their current opponents had managed to beat Yunduan City’s

number two guild, Carouse, by using the same strategy yesterday, every Cloud Herder Guild's member could not help but feel apprehensive right now.

The guild members firmly resolved to not be victimized of the same tactic. After a thorough investigation of Amethyst Rebirth, they had discovered that, besides the indomitable Svelte Dancer, its members were average. All the experience points she had gained in the last few days of the guild versus guild tournament and mercenary PvP tournament shot her up to level 42, obtaining that coveted throne of the one and only player at that level. She was now the highest level player in the entire server of Parallel World.

They also learned that this guild of beauties had one male member. All of them were positive that some extraordinary reason for such a unique exception must exist, so they resolved to take special note of this said male player. The Cloud Herder's members tried to single out a few other individuals of Amethyst Rebirth to come up with better strategies to deal with them, but honestly speaking, the majority of Amethyst Rebirth would definitely be the weakest guildmates if they were to join Cloud Herder. For these players to receive special attention from Cloud Herder, it was essentially similar to treating the trees and grass as actual soldiers.

Whatever the case might be, Cloud Herder had still opted to send out just fifty players for this match to defend against the Huge Kite strategy. By doing this, they had wholly fallen for Young Master Han's ploy for the entire PvP event of Parallel World.

Amethyst Rebirth actually benefited from Young Master Han's ploy. "Are you really okay with making a bridal dress for the others?" Gu Fei had actually posed this question to Young Master Han back then.

"If I were you, I would intentionally lose this match to Cloud Herder Guild, so that my overarching strategy would take an even bigger step toward perfection," Young Master Han opined. As Gu

Fei became absolutely speechless of his selfish suggestion, Young Master Han continued, “Naturally, you would be unwilling to do anything like that, so just go ahead and kill all you want! Let them experience the gap between experts and mediocre players and the true meaning of being oppressed! Also, cover your face! Not letting them know that you are part of our mercenary group is beneficial to us.”

Covering his face was not a big deal, so Gu Fei pulled out a black scarf and tied it to his face, quickly drawing the ladies’ attention to him.

“Why are you covering your face?” the ladies asked.

“It’s a strategy, not that any of you would understand,” Gu Fei shrugged their question off.

“Tsk!” The ladies clicked their tongues in annoyance.

“Our opponents have the same number as us, so let’s not run around like headless chickens and fight them head on instead!” Gu Fei suggested.

“Sure!” the ladies agreed; those with fast speed immediately matched their pace with everyone else’s.

“Svelte, come back. The guild has decided to advance together,” Gu Fei sent Svelte Dancer this message.

“When did the guild decide that?” Svelte Dancer asked back.

“Moments ago,” Gu Fei replied.

“F*ck. You should have told me earlier. I already have the enemy in my line of sight,” Svelte Dancer glumly made her way back to the pack.

The ladies would look quite imposing with them all gathered together if it were not for their constant chattering. After walking for how many meters, the ladies actually realized something: “Since we are not charging at them at our pace, why not just wait

for them to make their way to us?”

The rest of the ladies immediately agreed to this suggestion, so they stopped proceeding forward and proceeded to set up their PvP formation, patiently waiting for their enemies to head over to them.

In no time at all, Cloud Herder Guild's fifty men emanating strong killing intent arrived by the Amethyst Rebirth Guild's PvP formation. With this 'one for all, all for one' mentality, everyone of Cloud Herder was determined to not leave one guildmate behind and let the enemies earn a kill point.

“Kill!” Seeing that their opponents were set up before them, the Cloud Herder's men high-spiritedly charged toward them together.

“Archers! Mages!” July shouted. The Archers of Amethyst Rebirth moved forward and fired off arrows.

Cloud Herder Guild also called for its Archers to unleash their attacks, and a uniform row of arrows went sailing toward Amethyst Rebirth Guild.

The result of this exchange of arrows was quickly revealed: two ladies of Amethyst Rebirth died. Amethyst Rebirth's attack was weak and uncoordinated, which was a stark contrast to the opposing guild's attack. Both sides' Priests began to get busy. The two opposing sides were evenly matched in terms of numbers, yet Amethyst Rebirth's Priests were busier than Cloud Herder's. As such, quite a few of Amethyst Rebirth failed to be saved in time.

The distance between the two sides had entered the Mages' attack range, so the Mages of both sides made their way to the front of their respective PvP formations and chanted spells. The difference between the two forces was once more seen in this exchange.

The Archers of both guilds had adjusted their targets, beginning

to fire off arrows at the opposing Mages to interrupt their spell-casting. The Amethyst Rebirth's once more earned some casualties from this exchange.

Meanwhile, the Warriors of Cloud Herder also moved to the front of their PvP formation to shield the Mages from the enemies' attacks, as the Priests continued bestowing Heal on them.

Amethyst Rebirth lacked awareness in this aspect, only copying Cloud Herder's action upon seeing it. The PvP was constantly changing at a moment's notice, so how could such hesitation not cost the lives of the players involved? By the time Amethyst Rebirth thought of employing the same move, the PvP had already advanced to the next stage.

A certain black clothed, masked man within the Amethyst Rebirth's formation drew the attention of Cloud Herder Guild. His attire is quite unique; wonder what he's up to? Cloud Herder's men thought similarly about the man, but they did not just focus their attention on him as all were moving according to their duties. Cloud Herder's teamwork was great, as its many Archers could instantly coordinate their attacks to target specific opponents.

Fortunately, Gu Fei had already expected this situation to unfold. Bellowing to a certain lady above the PvP din, he then calmly chanted, "Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise! Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!"

The two guilds' Archers released their arrows just as the Mages of both sides chanted. While the chanting of the Cloud Herder's Mages was uninterrupted, the chanting of the Amethyst Rebirth's Mages was promptly interrupted by the enemy Archers' rain of arrows. Hearing Gu Fei's bellow, Svelte Dancer used her swiftest speed to arrive in front of him. She deflected most of the arrows heading his way and simply tanked the others with her body when she could not stop them in time. Svelte Dancer had top-grade equipment with high defense stat, so taking a few arrows would

not result into her death.

The Amethyst Rebirth's formation broke as all the ladies dispersed in every direction to dodge the incoming spells. The Cloud Herder's formation meanwhile remained in place. Gu Fei was the only Mage of Amethyst Rebirth who had managed to complete his chanting. One Mage's spells were not worth worrying about... was the mature assessment of Cloud Herder's men as they disregarded him entirely and focused their attention on making use of the chaos to take down the entire Amethyst Rebirth.

They did not even bother to move away as a flame wheel emerged above their heads and tiny flames sprouted beneath their feet. Only the Cloud Herder's Priests moved to ready their staves in response to the spell attack.

Hence... Once Gu Fei's two spells went into effect, a feeling of vacuity suddenly overcame Cloud Herder's many members

"How did our perfect fifty-man formation become so spacious and empty in an instant?", "My mate was just right beside me moments ago, why is he gone in the blink of an eye?", "Where are the others? They are no longer near me!" The remaining players of Cloud Herder could only see the vividly glowing fire around them while they were pondering questions like so.

By the time they realized that their guildmates were no longer around, they had already received the infallible system announcement. The system repeatedly updated its scoreboard until it finally announced the kill points of Cloud Herder and Amethyst Rebirth: 14 against 36.

The Amethyst Rebirth's ladies cheered, as the Cloud Herder's men were stupefied by this shocking outcome.

"Go!" Gu Fei nudged Svelte Dancer's back.

She nodded her head and sprinted toward the enemies. Gu Fei followed her closely behind as the fleeing ladies suddenly began to

attack the opponents in their individual ways.

Gu Fei had casted his spells in the middle of Cloud Herder's formation, cutting the fifty-man group into just one column on either side. These two columns were still neatly lined up; the Cloud Herder's men were skilled in this field, after all. Before the enemies could regain their senses, Svelte Dancer and Gu Fei had already begun their massacre.

The scores were constantly getting updated. By the time the ladies that had dispersed from their formation made it to the final skirmish, Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer had already killed off almost half of the Cloud Herder's remaining members. Gu Fei retreated to the side to eat a banana with his mana all depleted. Svelte Dancer's speed slowed as well with her Fleetfoot ending. Still, the ladies now held numerical superiority, so the Cloud Herder's members fell one after another. Finally, only Guild Leader Foe-herder was alive.

As an expert player, Foe-herder naturally remained calm and composed in the face of an encirclement of dozens of players. Extricating himself from the loss was impossible and wallowing about it was even more pointless. The black clothed, masked man was the only person in Foe-herder's mind right now.

His attire looked familiar, and the weapon he was holding... seemed to be a sword? If that was the case... Foe-herder tried his best to search for Gu Fei's figure amid the crowd, yet the latter had already distanced himself from the fight and was currently being shielded from view by the ladies as he ate a banana.

Just as Foe-herder was feeling aggrieved, he suddenly heard a man's voice come from within the crowd of ladies, "Leave this guy to me!" A masked man came forward in the next instant and stood right before Foe-herder.

The black scarf on his face was still there, yet the man was no longer wearing a black robe. His Appraisal identified the man's

new attire as the Flaming Robe. The weapon in his hand was no longer a sword as well, and it was now a Chinese broadsword. Appraisal of it indicated that it was called Sacred Flames of Baptism.

Was I mistaken? Foe-herder began to have misgivings. When a thought crossed his mind, he immediately asked, “Why is your face covered?”

“It’s a strategy!” Gu Fei honestly replied.

“Strategy?”

Gu Fei only nodded his head and firmly held the Chinese broadsword before him.

Foe-herder took a step back and dropped both his hands to his sides.

Cyclone! Gu Fei thought to himself. Battling up to this point, Foe-herder unexpectedly still managed to reserve enough Rage points to unleash Cyclone. His fighting experience was indeed not insignificant.

Foe-herder’s Cyclone usage was unique in how he would activate it when his opponent was a little further than usual, preventing his target from preemptively interrupting his attack. The only drawback to this was that due to the increase in distance, the skill activation must be done earlier. This made it much easier for the enemy to dodge it.

How could Gu Fei still not know the crux to breaking this tactic? He had actually darted forward to entice Foe-herder into unleashing his skill, intending to dodge it at the last second and slay the latter after Cyclone ran its course.

Foe-herder who had indeed fallen for his feint rotated his wrists to activate Cyclone. Gu Fei could clearly see his action and readied himself to evade it. Unexpectedly, an even faster figure appeared behind Foe-herder and battered his nape with a stiff baton.

Foe-herder's skill execution instantly stopped as the person smiled at Gu Fei, "This is a group PvP, why are you treating it like a duel?!"

Gu Fei helplessly smiled back at her as he waved to the ladies surrounding them, "Everyone, all together now!" Fireballs, arrows, Gu Fei's Chinese broadsword, and Svelte Dancer's dagger landed on Foe-herder, turning him into a beam of white light. This was the scene that ended today's guild match.

Over by the teleportation array outside the Main Hall of Guilds, the Cloud Herder's members were dejectedly shaking their heads. All could tell that they had lost this match when Foe-Herder was teleported out.

M*th*rf*ck*r! I just got ambushed without knowing it! I thought it was a one-on-one duel! Foe-herder was crestfallen. Thinking that he was the main character in that setting, he had actually thought that Svelte Dancer's words were for him.

In a short while, the victorious Amethyst Rebirth was also teleported outside after the system finished calculating the match result and awarded each member accordingly.

Foe-herder had long been keeping an eye on Amethyst Rebirth's exit to the PvP arena. Upon seeing that they were finally teleported outside of the PvP arena, he immediately approached them and called out to Gu Fei, "Hey, that brother over there!"

Gu Fei ignored his call and merely ran off with a brush of his sleeves. He was so fast that Foe-herder immediately gave up the thought of chasing after him and could only beseech the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies, "How may I address that brother who has just left?"

All the ladies looked at one another. This man was obviously similar to Carouse's guild leader, looking to poach Gu Fei after recognizing his high Spell Damage.

“What are you trying to do?! That guy is from our guild!” Svelte Dancer directly revealed his insidious intention.

Foe-herder brushed off her accusation with a smile, “I just wish to get to know him a little.”

“What’s there to know about him? We can all tell what you really want! So back the f*ck off!” Svelte Dancer drove him away.

Foe-herder could only helplessly return to his guild’s side and say to several members, “Find out what you can about that Mage! It shan’t be difficult to find information about the only male player of Amethyst Rebirth, right?”

“I’ve actually never heard of him before!” someone commented. Everyone was already aware that an all-female guild existed in Yunduan City after that incident with No Smile, yet no one knew that a male player was actually hidden within it until now.

“Hmm... Go ask the opponents Amethyst Rebirth met in the previous rounds. Information might be gathered from them,” Foe-herder changed his order, adding, “Maybe these guilds will know more about him.”

Saying that, Foe-herder suddenly recalled something as he abruptly slapped his thigh, “F*ck! When I was inquiring about how Carouse’s players had lost their match, they did not even mention anything about such an OP Mage. Those m*th*rf*ck*rs are also trying to recruit him! We gotta move fast. Get the whole guild to find out more about that guy!”

The members of Cloud Herder hurriedly inquired what they could to whomever they could. In that instant, a new legend of another black clothed, masked man rapidly spread all over Yunduan City.

Chapter 170 - Endlessly Searching for Him through the Night

People had long known that talent was the most valuable commodity in the twenty-first century. There were three types of talent necessary in establishing a guild: a natural-born leader, a smart adviser, and an indomitable fighter.

Only one player needed to possess the talent for leadership in a guild; the number of players that had to possess the talent for strategizing was dependent on the guild's size; lastly, many players that had the talent for fighting were necessary in a guild. Fortunately, a majority of the players in MMOs could be considered as possessing the talent for fighting.

Still, finding a Mage like Gu Fei who was akin to a Terminator with his ability to easily insta-kill anyone among the people with talent for fighting was difficult even in a large guild.

Terminator-like individuals possessed fighting prowess far beyond others. When one such person became the core of a mercenary group, that group could rally around him or her and easily dominate a PvP.

Many players could be slayers, yet only a few could become Terminator-like.

This sort of definitive expert had the strong backing of real-world currency, luckily acquired some kind of hidden quest, or was helped build a strong character by a well-bonded and close-knitted group.

Using some of the current Five Unyielding Experts as examples, Svelte Dancer belonged to the type that was backed by real-world currency, while Southern Lone Blade and Deep Waters were two professional gamers that could probably belong to the type that was supported by a group of like-minded individuals.

As for Gu Fei, he belonged to the type that had gotten lucky and obtained a hidden quest. In fact, he would easily step into the Five Unyielding Experts' domain if his full set of kung fu skills was included into the equation. Therefore, it was easy to understand why all those guild leaders could not forget him after witnessing his high Spell Damage.

As the Mage Gu Fei went to sleep that night, the two large guilds, Carouse and Cloud Herder, held an emergency meeting for finding out his identity.

Carouse's players had tried doing this yesterday, yet Amethyst Rebirth had not given them any answer even now. Brave Surge, the guild leader, was hesitant on pursuing the matter further with Amethyst Rebirth, as he felt that it would be far too awkward to do so when everyone could see that he was trying to poach the male Mage of Amethyst Rebirth to his guild. Amethyst Rebirth's refusal to give any information about the male Mage was therefore expected.

When Brave Surge heard the news of Cloud Herder Guild's defeat today to Amethyst Rebirth, he knew that he could no longer slowly probe about the OP Mage, as the Cloud Herder's men would surely be doing all they could to inquire about the Mage as well. This was why he had gathered his men tonight to discuss how they could uncover the Mage's identity more quickly.

In the two large guilds' respective headquarters, the guild leaders gave an identical message: "We need to move faster than Carouse/Cloud Herder in uncovering information about the Amethyst Rebirth's male Mage. Go make contact!"

Even the plan they had come up with was similar: "Plan A: Contacting Amethyst Rebirth directly is the most efficient method, so find a way to do this. Plan B: Contact Amethyst Rebirth's previous PvP tournament opponents; someone among them might know something about the Mage. Plan C: Talk to everyone in Yunduan City; perhaps, someone knows this Mage."

Both parties even emphasized on the same thing: “Do not tell others of this Mage’s fighting prowess. Utmost discretion is needed when looking for information about him to prevent other guilds like Carouse/Cloud Herder from getting wind of it.”

Still, the two guilds’ way of doing things had some differences.

Carouse lived up to its name as a large guild filled with players with all sorts of different talents. Once Plan A of ‘making contact with Amethyst Rebirth directly’ was suggested, several studs priding themselves as expert pick-up artists promptly volunteered for this job. They confidently claimed that the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies would be thoroughly smitten by them that they would willingly provide them the required information. Upon hearing this, Brave Surge swiftly agreed to the studs’ proposed reverse honey-pot approach. He even promised these studs that if their wooing attempts turned out to be successful, all the expenses that they had incurred while wooing the girls would be fully compensated by the guild.

Meanwhile, Cloud Herder, the other guild which was also interested in poaching Gu Fei was carrying out their Plan A in a different way. Owing to the fact that the members of Cloud Herder considered women to be on par with men when it came to playing games, they had decided to send female players of their own to infiltrate Amethyst Rebirth. Once these ‘spies’ managed to join Amethyst Rebirth as new members, all they had to do was look through the guild’s members list to find out the identity and IGN of the mystery Mage – a very simple plan, indeed. Foe-herder was very agreeable to this simple idea and told the female players that he would find a way to repay the losses that they would incur for quitting Cloud Herder Guild.

As for their Plan B of ‘contacting Amethyst Rebirth’s previous PvP tournament opponents’, both sides’ actions were almost identical. The two guilds searched Parallel World’s official website for the guilds Amethyst Rebirth had faced in the first and second

rounds of the guild versus guild tournament.

Those two guilds were small guilds at level 1 that Brave Surge and Foe-herder barely paid attention to, so finding out the members' names in both guilds was bound to be difficult. Fortunately, the identities of the two small guilds' leaders could be learned from the Main Hall of Guilds.

Brave Surge and Foe-herder seemed to enter the Main Hall of Guilds simultaneously. As leaders of large guilds in Yunduan City, they might not be close with each other, but they at least knew of each other's existence. Seeing how they were heading toward the same direction, the two could easily tell that the other had the same goal for going there. Merely exchanging polite smiles without one another, they busied themselves with the task at hand.

The two started to look up information on Amethyst Rebirth's first round opponent in the guild versus guild tournament, the Unbeatable under the Heavens Guild, and tried adding its guild leader as a friend, but sadly the guild leader was currently offline. As for the guild going up against Amethyst Rebirth in the second round of the tournament ... Brave Surge and Foe-herder's hearts thumped when they saw the name of its guild leader.

Sakurazaka Moony. This guild leader was actually a powerful expert that was ranked pretty high on the Archer leaderboard. Even if he was online, he would unlikely be reachable.

Nevertheless, the two guild leaders still gave adding Sakurazaka Moony on their friends list a try and subsequently failed. Downtrodden, the two encountered each other once more on their way out of the Main Hall of Guilds. Thinking that the other must have met the same fate, each of them felt a little better about what they had just experienced.

Actually, the two only had to find a woman to add Sakurazaka Moony on her friends list and they would succeed in contacting him, yet they were unfortunately unaware of this fact. This could

not be blamed on them, though. Who would even think that the setting of Sakurazaka Moony's friends list was set in a way that only a female could add him as a friend?

Time was needed before they could advance further in this part of their plan, so the two guild leaders proceeded to execute Plan C and promptly rallied a large number of their men to roam Yunduan City's streets and randomly ask players about the OP Mage.

"Did you know that Amethyst Rebirth has a male player?" was the theme of the two guilds' players' questions, which would usually earn them two kinds of reaction. The first: "Ah?! Amethyst Rebirth is now accepting male players?!" The second: "F*ck! Why are you people repeatedly asking me this question? Who are you guys?!"

Given how this particular operation lacked thorough preparation and that players would constantly move around in the city, quite a lot of them had ended up being asked this question many times. Some of the weak-willed players could no longer stand this repeated inquiry and ran off to the nearest log-off points to escape.

That night, these two large guilds' questioning had caused Yunduan City to hold the lowest amount of online players ever since the official release of Parallel World.

However, the more irritating thing here was that the two guilds had not gotten any results despite such a large-scale deployment of manpower. During their search, some were fortunate enough to meet the players who had clashed with Amethyst Rebirth in the first two rounds. The resulting conversation was as follows:

"Have you guys fought with Amethyst Rebirth before?"

"Yeah!"

Both guilds' members would get excited whenever they met players who gave out this reply, as this meant that they had finally

found the right individuals to ask! In such cases, the follow-up question would come almost immediately, “Do you know that Amethyst Rebirth has a male Mage?”

“Of course.”

The guild men’s eyes overflowed with tears as they hugged one another, thinking that the matter was finally about to end. “What’s the Mage’s name?” They pricked their ears attentively, just in case they missed what was being said.

“How would I know?” was the reply that they got.

The resulting outpouring of words would make even a sailor blush.

The two large guilds spent the whole night asking questions as if they were hosting a quiz game. They wore themselves out so much that they had actually forgotten that there was a good chance that those from Unbeatable under the Heavens and Forever in Flowers were also unaware of the OP Mage's identity just like them.

“A man of Jianghu, filled with legends, yet none knows his name...” Many of the two guilds’ players started visualizing a blurry, black clothed man before them whenever they talked about him.

Encountering each other in a certain tavern while taking a rest, this was already the forty-seventh time Brave Surge and Foe-herder had crossed paths. Prior to this, they had met for forty-six times in forty-six different locations all over Yunduan City. Being guild leaders, they naturally had to participate in the ‘quiz game’ to set an example for their respective guild members.

Meeting at this moment, the original feeling of rivalry between them was long gone and was replaced by mutual sympathy for each other.

“Take a seat!” Brave Surge spiritedly said to Foe-herder, yet his voice betrayed his exhaustion.

Foe-herder sat down across Brave Surge; his face haggard as he waved a hand to the bartender, “One, please.”

“How are things on your end?” Brave Surge asked.

“What are you asking me for? It’s the same situation over here,” Foe-herder replied. Asking this sort of question was redundant since the answer was already written on the two guild leaders’ faces.

Both men sighed deeply, just as Foe-herder’s liquor was brought over. “Cheers to your hard work!” Foe-herder raised his glass toward Brave Surge.

“You, too,” Brave Surge gave a wry smile as their glasses clinked and drained their liquor in one go.

“I’m baffled. How can such a powerful player not even have a bit of prestige to him?” Foe-herder wondered aloud.

Brave Surge shook his head, “Maybe, it’s because few people are playing at night. Perhaps, the chatter in the morning will bring more result.”

“Hmm... Perhaps!” Foe-herder agreed to his hypothesis, as his plan to have a few female players infiltrate Amethyst Rebirth had been stalled due to this. The Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies were not online in the wee hours.

The pick-up artist team that Carouse had sent walked about the city, hoping to create a chance encounter with the ladies. They asked every woman they met if they were of Amethyst Rebirth, turning their heads and leaving once they heard them say no.

Very quickly, many ladies in Yunduan City were angered by this, “What was that all about?! So what if I am not from Amethyst Rebirth? Must I be looked down upon just because I am not from that guild?”

Just this act alone had offended almost all the ladies in Yunduan City, yet these flirts did not know of this. From here onward, they

would no longer be able to pick up any ladies within Yunduan City.

As for those ladies Cloud Herder had sent as spies, they found no one in the Amethyst Rebirth's headquarters. The female guild leader was not online as well, so these spies sat by the door like idiots to show their sincerity of joining the guild! These spies were later mistaken for members of Amethyst Rebirth by those pick-up artists that Carouse had sent, who tried their best to pander and cajole the good senses of these ladies. In the end, these flirts almost got into a fight with the spies when they found out what was really going on.

Both guild leaders kept shaking their heads and sighing upon the mention of this incident. It had happened during their fortieth encounter, with both hurriedly resolving the situation before it escalated. At the same time, both parties learned of the method that their rival was attempting, resulting in either side enacting the same plan as well.

The only difference was that Carouse had quickly managed to find female spies on their end, while no men from Cloud Herder were willing to attempt the reverse honey-pot approach after seeing how the local ladies were treating those 'studs' despite Foe-herder promising great rewards for those who would succeed. Even now Foe-herder was feeling quite indignant about how things had unfolded.

"So, what are you gonna do next?" Brave Surge asked.

"Well..." Foe-herder hesitated.

"What's there not to say? Even if we withhold information here, I guarantee that it will just be a matter of time before either of us find out about the other's plan. And I assure you neither of us will have an edge in recruiting that person if this goes on."

"That's not it. I'm actually still thinking of what to do next," Foe-herder admitted.

“Randomly asking around isn’t the way, either. How many players are there in Yunduan City?”

“Ten thousand? Twenty thousand? Or is it thirty thousand?” Foe-herder offered.

“All can be!” Brave Surge nodded his head gravely. “How long are we gonna keep quizzing people? The total manpower of our guilds combined is just over one thousand people, so there’s no guarantee that we will obtain information from doing this.”

“You have a point. I even feel that we might get chased out of the city by the masses if we end up irking them so much with all our questioning,” Foe-herder added morosely.

Brave Surge leaked out a sly smile, “Hey, I’m not gonna keep this from you. Whenever anything happened and people asked what guild we came from, I’ve been instructing my men to say that we are from Cloud Herder.”

Foe-herder felt stunned for a moment when he heard this before abruptly bursting into laughter.

“What’s the matter?” Brave Surge asked, perplexed.

Foe-herder was laughing so much that he could not even say a word. He raised his hand to point at Brave Surge before pointing at himself.

Brave Surge immediately understood what he meant, “You mean to say that your guild has also been doing the same and was putting the blame on us, Carouse?”

Foe-herder was still laughing uncontrollably as he nodded his head.

“F*ck!” Brave Surge cursed, recalling how many times they had encountered each other in this one night. It was about forty-seven times if he included this meeting.

Forty-seven times... Godd*mn! Why am I so bored that I actually

keep track of our chance encounters... With this thought in mind, Brave Surge asked Foe-herder, “How many times have we met just tonight alone?”

Foe-herder slowly stopped laughing as he replied, “Forty-eight times.”

“Eh? Forty-eight, not forty-seven? Did I miss one?” Brave Surge asked aloud.

“You didn’t,” Foe-herder answered, explaining, “There’s a time I saw you, but you didn’t see me. I doubt you would include that.”

“You can’t count that if I actually missed you,” Brave Surge chastised lightly.

“Mhm-mhm. I’m counting the number of times I saw you not met you,” Foe-herder retorted.

“Ha ha ha...” Both men shared a moment together.

As they chatted on, the door to the tavern suddenly burst open as someone rushed over to Brave Surge’s side, “Guild Leader, I thought of a method! Why don’t we put up posters all over Yunduan City, so that people will come to us instead? Perhaps, the Mage himself may contact us if he sees it!”

Brave Surge’s expression changed when he heard the suggestion, “You could just message me, so why did you have to run over?”

“Eh? I happen to be passing by and saw that you are drinking here. What’s the matter?”

Brave Surge did not say another word as the person sitting across him slowly turned over and happily faced the newcomer, “That’s a pretty good idea you’ve got there!”

“Foe-herder?!” The player almost fainted, finally realizing why Brave Surge had admonished him. How would he have guessed that these two guild leaders would be drinking together?

“D*mn! You managed to acquire such a great idea from us,”

Brave Surge felt disgruntled.

“Don’t worry. I won’t waste this tip-off,” Foe-herder replied.

“That’s more like it. Hit me up when you receive information!” Brave Surge promptly said.

“What?” Foe-Herder asked, looking at him with an incredulous look on his face.

“Eh? What—”

“What I meant is that this round is on me! Why would I tell you anything if I receive any information?” Foe-herder asked, laughing.

Brave Surge had assumed that Foe-herder was planning to share information to them in return for the great tip-off, yet he had been wholly wrong. This caused his expression to darken, “Don’t feel so pleased with yourself, as if you would receive a word on this matter before us. Don’t forget that I have more men in my guild than you.”

“That’s right. You have WAY more men than my guild,” Foe-herder said sarcastically.

“F*ck! Let’s go!” Brave Surge brought the player of his along and left in a huff.

With this another chance to headhunt the black clothed Mage, the sympathetic attitude they had for each other swiftly disappeared, once more standing on opposite sides for this struggle for talent.

Foe-herder did not hurry to leave and stayed at where he was seated. In no time at all, several men walked up to him.

“What’s the matter, boss?” these men asked.

Foe-herder chuckled, “I was sitting and chatting with Brave Surge here moments ago when a guild member of his blurted out an idea, and I happened to hear what it is.”

“What is it?” these men pressed on.

“Posters!” Foe-herder eagerly replied.

“Oh!” The men’s eyes immediately lit up.

“Not a bad idea, huh? Quickly get this done as soon as you can. Write a few more, as well. We won’t just be posting posters; we’ll even hand out flyers on the streets. No matter where it flies to, someone will surely read it and find us. Remember to mention about a substantial remuneration for information!” Foe-herder ordered.

“How much should it be?” someone asked.

“Hmm... This...” Foe-herder hesitated. It was not an issue with currency, but that Carouse would also be doing the same thing. No matter how much amount was stated, both guilds might end up trying to one-up each other, resulting into the person selling the information to profit from this matter.

It seemed that he would have to discuss this matter with Brave Surge. Just as Foe-herder was thinking of this, Brave Surge burst through the tavern double doors and approached Foe-herder, “I need to discuss something with you.”

How coincidental! Foe-herder muttered to himself. Could we have thought of the same thing?

“You guys won’t be stupid enough to put the remuneration right on the posters, right?” Brave Surge asked.

They were indeed on the same page. Foe-herder was very impressed as he shook his head with a smile, “Of course, not. I know what you’re worried about.”

“Oh, that’s good. We should corroborate on matters that can be worked together!” Brave Surge smilingly recommended.

“I agree,” Foe-herder nodded his head.

“We shall see what you guys write, then,” Brave Surge stood by

the side sternly.

Those men of Cloud Herder were already making a poster to put its content on the guild channel once it was done so that the other members could copy it word-for-word. With their competitor standing right beside them, these people writing up the content of the poster felt somewhat uncomfortable and stared blankly at Brave Surge.

“F*ck off! Stop interrupting when they're trying to focus!” Foe-herder shoved Brave Surge to the side.

“Do you two big bosses really not intend to include the remuneration on the posters?” a sudden voice came over.

When Brave Surge and Foe-herder looked at the voice's origin, they saw a beautiful lady stand up from a table and make her way to them.

The two exchanged looks before asking the lady, “What do you mean?”

“If you don't mention the remuneration, how would I know who to sell this information I have on me?!” the beauty explained.

“What information?” the two asked.

“That level 39 Mage of Amethyst Rebirth!” the beauty smirked.

The two looked at each other once more and asked, “Are you from Amethyst Rebirth?”

“No.” The beauty shook her head, saying, “I just happen to have the information you two are seeking.”

“Oh? How did that happen?”

“Because I know the man that you two are looking for,” she replied.

“What's his name?” The two said at the same time, the only difference being their tone.

The beauty smiled, not saying another word.

“Uhh...” The two men realized what was happening. Brave Surge thought for a bit before saying, “Lady, please don’t leave just yet!” With that, he grabbed Foe-herder and pulled him to the side.

Chapter 171 - A Rare Commodity Presides Within

The beauty stood on one spot as Brave Surge pulled Foe-herder to the side.

“That woman has been here all along, so she knows our intention. We can’t let her lead us on,” Brave Surge said, adding, “Since we’re here together, we should not compete for this and instead split the price to buy this information from her.”

Foe-herder nodded his head, “That’s a good idea. It spares one of us from not knowing this way, as well as from getting hustled.”

“Worse is if she sells this information to one and sells it again to another; that just means everyone gets hustled,” Brave Surge added.

“That makes a lot of sense,” Foe-herder agreed.

“So we must work together right now,” Brave Surge said earnestly.

“We should, indeed.”

After discussing the matter, the two headed back to the beauty’s side.

The beauty gave them a faint smile, “How did the discussion between the two big bosses go?”

“State your price!” Since they were no longer fighting over the remuneration, it was naturally better to let the seller state her price. It was a very safe method in negotiations.

“Oh? I want to hear the price you guys have set for your remuneration first!” the beauty said instead.

The two looked at each other first before saying, “Darling, don’t waste our time. Everyone here knows what’s going on so we won’t

be bidding for it. Just tell us your price and we'll buy it together."

The beauty helplessly sighed, "If that's the case, the price will be 1000 gold coins!"

"D*mn, girl! You're quite vicious!" the two exclaimed, dumbfounded.

Although many people had joined Parallel World after its official release and invigorated the market by causing the prices of goods to increase as well as the amount of gold coins being spent, the surge had only been for a few months and the market had since settled back down. Thus, 1000 gold coins was still not a small amount.

Using the current market price for in-game equipment, weapons with skills, especially the ones with unique skills, were priced the highest. This type of weapons could be considered to be of the highest tier among top-grade items. Even if the additional traits on the items were bad, no one would consider them as trash. These items were usually at purple tier with a few that were at gold tier. It was just impossible for blue-tier items to have unique skills. This sort of equipment had no market value to speak of, so it could only be transacted based on the buyer and the seller's agreed upon price. Out of all the officially released transactions to date, 5000 gold coins was the highest price that a buyer and a seller had agreed on. It was unknown, though, if private deals with even higher prices had occurred among players.

Below this equipment with skills would be equipment without skills in the order of purple, gold, blue, and white tiers. The difference between the four tiers lay in the traits that the weapons had. White-tier weapons had no additional traits, blue-tier weapons had two traits, gold-tier weapons had three or four traits, and purple tier had five or more traits. The price would be determined by what traits these items had and the value of each trait. Most items cost hundreds, while the rarely seen and thus termed as top-grade equipment cost thousands.

As for the rumored green-tier equipment that came in a set, it might be as good as a myth. Green-tier equipment had yet to be sighted on the current market, so it naturally had no market price as well.

According to the information that the officials had leaked thus far, the advantage of green-tier equipment lay in the hidden traits that it had once the set entire was collected. Individually, green-tier equipment was no better than blue-tier or gold-tier equipment and could not even compare to the purple-tier equipment.

Hearing that this beauty's opening price was the price for top-grade equipment, the two guild leaders immediately thought that she was insane.

The two had every intention of expanding their respective guilds' influence and might, so they were of course willing to pay thousands of gold coins, provided that the Mage was guaranteed to join their guild. With just his IGN, neither of them felt that the price the lady had quoted them was worth it.

The beauty smiled, "Is it too pricey? Then, I guess we can forget about it!"

"Yeah, we'll forget about it. It's better off just putting out those posters," Brave Surge politely declined, tugging Foe-herder along with him.

Foe-herder was a bit reluctant to let go of this source of information, so he used his job class as a Warrior to resist Brave Surge's pull. Brave Surge threw him a backward glance before hurriedly sending him a message: "Don't be hasty. I'm sure she'll call us back. It's only a name. How is she going to earn anything from that if we pass on this offer?"

These two men did not waste a whole night together for naught and, at the very least, had added each other on their friends list.

Foe-herder saw the logic in Brave Surge's thinking, so he quickly

followed Brave Surge outside of the tavern.

“Are we leaving, guild leader?” Foe-herder’s men were still on the table, chasing after them once they saw the two guild leaders leaving the premise.

“Let’s go! We’ll sticking to our plan of making posters!” Foe-herder cried out intentionally.

“Okay!” the men answered as they began to follow the two men outside.

“Still not calling us back?” Foe-herder became quite anxious now that they were almost out of the double doors.

Guess we can’t turn back, either. F*cking hell. 1000 gold coins. If you’re gonna spend that much, go do it yourself. I would rather stick to the posters. I refuse to believe that she’s the only one who knows this Mage in Yunduan City, Brave Surge comforted himself.

The two men really ended up leaving the tavern as the beauty quietly watched them.

“Oh, well. Guess we really gotta put up those posters now,” Foe-herder sighed.

Brave Surge shrugged to show his helplessness. Just as Foe-herder was about to speak further, he saw two members of Carouse walk past him. Calling for Brave Surge’s attention, they proceeded to tear two pages off the notepads that they were carrying and pasted them on the wall outside the tavern.

“F*ck, you’re really wily. Your boys have already started posting,” Foe-herder yelped as he read the content of Carouse’s poster.

[Search notice: Looking for a certain male player who has managed to join Amethyst Rebirth Guild. Please contact me if anyone has information about him.]

What followed after were these words in large font: ‘HUGE CASH

REWARD AWAITING YOU!’ The contact listed below was actually a player’s name instead of a guild.

“Mhm!” Foe-herder nodded his head, knocking on the poster and saying to his men, “Write something like this. Don’t reveal our guild’s identity since that will be too conspicuous.”

The two guilds had not mentioned even once this black-clothed Mage’s prowess in this whole night of questioning and merely described him as deplorable man who had managed to get into an all-female guild, not once indicating that he was a powerful character.

“Quickly get everyone in the guild to get on this!” Foe-herder grew anxious once he saw that Carouse had already begun pasting their posters. While saying this, he took out his notepad and personally wrote out a copy by the tavern entrance. He then instructed everyone on the guild channel: “We need to move fast. Put posters up everywhere that Carouse has pasted and to the places that their guild hasn’t done so.”

“That’s pretty good!” Brave Surge commented upon seeing Foe-herder’s beautiful penmanship on the two posters the latter had hastily made.

“Hmph! We’re having a friendly competition right now, so we can paste wherever we want. But! Don’t even think about tearing off the posters from our side!” Foe-herder warned.

“Of course. We need to agree on matters when the need arises,” Brave Surge said as he put forth similar instructions to his guild, “We have an accord with Cloud Herder. Nobody is allowed tear off each other’s posters.”

“We won’t tear them off, but we can just paste ours over theirs!” Carouse truly did not lack for cunning schemers.

“Hmm. Everyone should do what they deem as appropriate!” Brave Surge’s words implied that he was neither against nor for

the suggestion that the member had given. It was important for a guild leader to master the art of ambiguity to give members freedom to do what was necessary. Credit would be given when results were shown, while responsibility could be pushed away if needed be; it was the best of both worlds.

Both guilds became busy from this point onward. The entire Yunduan City – the walls on the streets, the doors of business establishments, the roads of often used streets, and so on – was filled with those little posters.

Foe-herder even instructed his men to climb up the Bell Tower and the City Hall and throw a stack of posters off of them. “We’ll let the wind be the bearer of our message!” was what Foe-herder said when he made them execute it.

In that moment, papers flew all over Yunduan City. Wherever players walked to, there would be posters of this black-clothed Mage. There were so many of these posters that people could now recite their content word-for-word without looking.

The contacts that the two large guilds had assigned quickly received many inquiries about the remuneration issue and the information required.

“Hello, player! Appropriate reward will be given based on the information you have provided. If you have any information regarding the person in question, we hope to speak with you personally” was the contacts’ generic response to the public’s general inquiries.

Many players quickly began to ask for a face-to-face meeting. Foe-herder and Brave Surge were elated at first and promptly set up rendezvous points, awaiting the informants to come to them. However, these two guild leaders soon felt that something was off, given the quick response that they were getting. With more and more people asking for a meet-up and each saying that they had information regarding the OP Mage, the two realized that they

themselves did not know anything about the black-clothed Mage. Therefore, they had no way of verifying the validity of any information. Given how abuzz the whole city was regarding this matter, both were positive that some swindlers would be present in these meet-ups.

This was the drawback of acquiring information through such method. If they had stated a guild was behind this, most of the swindlers would think twice before doing the deed. After all, offending a whole guild was a lot more serious than just one player. Since this was just an individual, the swindlers would not even bat an eye as they cheated their mark, quickly taking off after.

In the blink of an eye, the two guilds' respective rendezvous points had already amassed thirty-seven different names for the Mage. The contacts in charge were no fools either and also realized that things had not gone according to plan upon seeing the situation at hand.

These contacts also did not know if the information that they were getting held some truth, so they were truly stumped on whether to accept it or not.

Some of those who had come to make a quick buck somewhat felt guilty upon seeing the situation and opted to just leave. The remaining players were those who had placed money over their morality and insisted that the information that they had provided was factual, demanding to receive the expected reward. They even tried to discredit their fellow swindlers by calling one another as liars. This was precisely how Carouse and Cloud Herder ended up with thirty-seven different IGNs.

Seeing that the matter was about to escalate into a PvP when these swindlers did not get their reward, Brave Surge and Foeherder each brought their men to their respective rendezvous points.

The two were wringing their hands regarding their plight when they saw the listed names that their contacts had collected. Society was truly in a decline. This situation was a visible representation of the death of morality! The general etiquette that the people practiced in-game was no longer like before. Brave Surge attempted to add these IGNs, yet none of them were online. There was even someone called 'Butterfly Blue' that the system had stated did not exist in-game.

"Who gave me this name?!" Brave Surge asked genially.

Someone's eyes flashed, as he hurriedly bounded over, "Me! Me!"

"You g*dd*mn idiot! You don't even know how to swindle properly, providing a name that does not exist in the game at all! I'll show you what 'does not exist' mean!" Brave Surge casted a series of spells in his anger and bombarded the man to his death right there and then. He then slammed the butt of his magic staff on the ground as he shook the list of names in his other hand: "Who else claims that the IGN he or she has given is real?"

No one dared to say a word. The swindlers stuck their tongues out as if this was all a prank and quickly made their escape.

"Looks like this method isn't working," Brave Surge sighed as he furrowed his brows.

"I think we need them to provide us some concrete evidence," someone suggested.

Brave Surge nodded his head. Evidently, those who had just left were swindlers. Had he the heart, he would give them all a good tongue lashing for their lack of morals.

Not all the players had scheduled to meet up this time. When that bunch of swindlers was chased off, others tried to muddle their way through this. Learning that they were swindlers as well, Brave Surge only awarded them his brutal threats.

Furthermore, the posters' content was revised, such that players

could not attempt to bluff their way through. In half an hour's time, the rendezvous point that Brave Surge had set became crisp and quiet.

"How are things on your end?" Brave Surge messaged Foe-herder.

"I'm super busy!" Foe-herder hurriedly replied.

"Ah? You've received news?" Brave Surge asked, stunned.

"I'm erasing my points! I currently have 28 PK points!" Foe-herder choked back his sob, adding, "I thought the patrolling soldiers would arrest me just now!"

Brave Surge could not stifle his laughter. It seemed that Foe-herder had a shorter fuse than him, killing all those who had attempted to bluff their way to get the reward.

Could it be that no one in Yunduan City knows this person? Brave Surge thought to himself, That's just not possible. Those who know him must be offline right now... Or the ones online are all good friends of his... Sigh!

Brave Surge immediately realized that their approach was a double-edged sword. Because they did not want other guilds to get a wind of such a powerful Mage, they refrained from mentioning the Mage's fighting prowess and only identified him as the sole male player of Amethyst Rebirth. Anyone who saw the posters would immediately assume that a bunch of players was looking for the Mage to get revenge. In such a scenario, any friend of the Mage would not betray him. Who would even think that a large guild was looking to recruit him?

Brave Surge felt frustrated. He had originally thought that this method was rather comprehensive, yet it was actually filled with pros and cons. In the end, there were hardly any pros in this method, while all the cons were blatantly revealed.

With the contact person not having anything to do for over half

an hour and the lateness of the hour in-game, he continued to nod off like a chick pecking on rice and could not hold himself back from yawning. He was soon sprawled on the table, fast asleep. Even Brave Surge felt lethargic as well. He had done nothing of value this whole night and wasted his time on a fruitless approach. Perhaps, this method would be best employed at daytime when more people were online.

Someone slipped into the room for their rendezvous point just as he was about to call it a night. Brave Surge turned his head and felt surprised, "It's you." It was the beautiful lady at the tavern.

The beauty still had a mischievous grin on her face as she regarded Brave Surge, "How's the result of your posters?"

Brave Surge stayed silent. This woman at least had the confidence to mention that the Mage they were looking for was at level 39, which made her more trustworthy than those players who had come to him today. It was quite possible that she indeed knew who the Mage was.

However, Brave Surge was adamant on admitting that his poster plan had failed, knowing that this woman would seize the opportunity to raise the price once more.

Am I willing to spend 1000 gold coins or not?! Brave Surge asked this question to himself. The positive thing here was that Foe-herder was not present. Although the two now had a rather cordial relationship, Brave Surge would still rather find the Mage while Foe-Herder failed on his search for him. It was a grand opportunity to have this woman before him and not Foe-herder's!

Brave Surge was quite tempted to spend 1000 gold coins for this exclusive information, but after tonight's experience, it could be said that his trust for everyone in-game was at the lowest.

Even if this woman accepted his 1000 gold coins and promised to not leak the information to Foe-herder, how would he know that she kept her word? This lady who was trying to earn a fortune

from her information was very likely to look for Foe-herder once she had earned a tidy profit from him. For this greedy woman, it was not past her to do something so unscrupulous.

“Big Boss Surge, what are you deeply thinking about?” The beauty’s gaze on Brave Surge was unreadable.

“Darling, your price is just too high,” Brave Surge admitted.

“Is that so?” The beauty laughed daintily, “I thought that after all that you have experienced, you two would understand the value of the information I have on me.”

“So you’ve already guessed the outcome,” Brave Surge’s expression changed. This woman is pretty farsighted if she has already foreseen this result that neither Foe-herder nor I thought of while executing this plan!

The beauty remained smiling.

“So what do you want to do?” Brave Surge asked.

“Continue selling the information I have on me, of course!” the beauty replied frankly.

“All we want to know is a name, darling. Your price is far too high,” Brave Surge did not back down.

The beauty slowly shook her head, “Looks like you don’t do business a lot. You’ve at least heard of the story behind ‘A rare commodity presides within’, right? Although some things appear to be superficial at the start, there will come a time when they rise in value. The only question is that are you able to seize this opportunity in time?”

Brave Surge mirthlessly laughed, “And you think that his IGN is a rare commodity?”

“You’ve wasted two days and yet you could not even learn his name; would you not call it a rare commodity as well?”

“I’ve only busied myself with this matter in this one night. There

are fewer people online at night. I'm certain that I will hear something this morning," Brave Surge justified.

The beauty smiled, "I think I have a better understanding of his circumstance, so I can safely assure you that the situation in the day will be just the same as tonight. Because no one will even know who you're talking about."

Brave Surge froze before he suddenly laughed, "The Amethyst Rebirth's ladies are not online at night. Why would I be afraid to wait and see what happens at daytime? Do you mean to tell me that even the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies don't know him?"

"They do know him." The beauty chuckled slightly, "Do you think that I can't tell them to not reveal his identity because someone is trying to poach him? And that the men and women who wish to get to know them will all have ill-intentions...."

"You!" Brave Surge could not believe that their plan was easily uncovered by this woman, "Just how long have you got your eyes on us?"

"Oh... Not very long. It's only after people kept on asking me if I am a member of Amethyst Rebirth and knowing that the matter pertains to a certain male player in that guild," the beauty admitted, adding, "From that moment onward, I realized that I know something of great value. When it comes to such things, it's important to properly manage it. Don't worry, besides me, I guarantee that you won't find another person who will tell you information about him."

"Are you trying to dupe me? Hmph! I'll have you know that I am not afraid to test whether you are the only one who has that piece of information!" Brave Surge challenged.

"He he! Try it if you wish, but let me tell you; if you have yet to find out anything by the end of the PvP tournament the next night, the price for this information will increase. You should be aware that most guilds that are still in the running are no longer small

guilds. They will most likely have the same intentions as you do and will love to poach him away to their guilds. Hmm... Wonder which guild is Amethyst Rebirth matched up with this time? I haven't checked it out yet! He he... No matter. Given the strength he possesses, he is bound to attract attention no matter the match's outcome. I do hope that Amethyst Rebirth wins, though. The more rounds he gets through, the more attention he will get. Can you even imagine how much more I could earn once all the big guilds wish to know about his name?" When the beauty finished her soliloquy, she gave Brave Surge a wink that was full of expectation.

Without waiting for Brave Surge to say another word, she had already waved her sleeves gracefully and turned away. Walking a few steps, she turned back and smiled, "I'll take my leave first. You better think carefully, Big Boss Surge. The price I have set will still be 1000 gold coins before the upcoming match. You can send me a private message later; my name is Xi Xiaotian."

Xi Xiaotian then drifted off, leaving Brave Surge and the other members with him rooted to the spot.

One piece of information for 1000 gold coins... To buy or not to buy, that was the question!

Chapter 172 - An Epiphany

The sun was already shining brightly, be it in-game or in reality, so a vibrant morning greeted everyone today.

A soft breeze gently carried several flyers away like string-less kites above Brave Surge's head. Sadly, Brave Surge was not in a bright and cheery mood today. With a wave of his hand, a ball of fire formed and shot toward the scattered posters on the ground, burning them into fine ash that the wind blew away.

Brave Surge's search for a certain Mage still came up with nothing even though it was already daytime, ruining his mood immensely. Furthermore, the men he had asked to investigate this Xi Xiaotian person discovered that she was quite a popular character in the trading community. Many claimed that the prices she put forth for any kinds of in-game goods were always fair and that she had a good grasp of the pricing of items in Yunduan City.

"Is she a professional trader, then?" Brave Surge wrinkled his brows in distaste. He had always hated this sort of gamers. He viewed any player who would rather do business online instead of play the game seriously as extremely distasteful.

Brave Surge had never considered this sort of players as having any value. Even if I die, I won't let that Xi Xiaotian lady earn 1000 gold coins from me, he resolved to himself. And yet, he could not help but worry about Foe-herder's side. If Xi Xiaotian sought Foe-herder next, he would probably pay the stated price... After all, Foe-herder did not show enough restraint back when they were leaving the tavern.

Seeing that Foe-herder was still showing as online on his friends list, Brave Surge sent him a message: "What are you up to?"

"I just finished clearing off my PK value, so I'm about to log off." Foe-herder exhaled deeply in relief.

“Any leads on your end?” Brave Surge asked.

“Nope... I’ll wait till midday before deciding on what to do next. Few people are online at night,” Foe-herder replied.

“Did that lady from the tavern look for you again?” Brave Surge was not in the mood to beat around the bush, so he promptly asked him this question.

“Nah,” Foe-herder replied, saying, “Are you still thinking about her? You’re insane! 1000 gold coins? I believe 100 gold coins will more than suffice to loosen the lips of those from Amethyst Rebirth. It’s just a name, and it’s not even a guarantee that he can be poached even if his name is revealed to others. Surely, they wouldn’t be too cautious and discreet just to refrain themselves from revealing a name, right?”

“Mmm... You’re right,” Brave Surge answered. This was indeed another method he had been thinking about.

“Okay, that’s enough for now. I’m really tired, so I’m logging off,” With that last line, Foe-herder promptly went offline.

Brave Surge was also feeling extremely tired at the moment. He immediately sent out a notice on the guild channel for the players who were online in the day to continue the matter. The guild would reward the person accordingly as long as he or she had information on the target.

After making all the necessary arrangements, Brave Surge and his friends were about to head off toward the nearest log-off point, the Mage Academy, as well when a bellow came from behind them: “‘Bounty Mission’! Please leave if you’re not involved!”

Brave Surge froze. He had PK value on him. Although he was not as crazy as Foe-herder with his 28 PK points, he had still killed off quite a few of those shameless swindlers hours ago.

Brave Surge had accumulated 6 PK points overnight. He had even reminded Foe-herder who was crazily erasing his PK points about

it, so that he would not accidentally pick up the ‘Bounty Mission’ targeting him. Who would have guessed that someone else would still target him in the end? This doesn’t make sense at all! Besides that anomaly Foe-herder, who would actually pick up a ‘Bounty Mission’ with 6 PK points? Oh, it’s now 5 PK points; not too far off from 4 PK points, in fact.

Brave Surge and his friends slowly turned around to look at the illogical person and instantly felt tears welling up in their eyes.

It was truly a matter of searching repeatedly among the crowd, as the person that they were looking for was currently standing before them.

Brave Surge was overcome with emotions, so he stuttered for the longest time as he pointed at the Mage, “You – You – You....”

Right before him was Gu Fei in the flesh. As a physical education teacher, he usually did not have classes in the morning. Still, he also usually did not get online to play games at this time of the day. It just so happened that Gu Fei had managed to reach level 40 after the two matches last night, so he was hoping to do his Job Class Advancement now to experiment with it in the upcoming PvP tournament tonight. This was why he had hurriedly rushed back to play the game after his morning exercises.

After getting online, he immediately made his way to the Mage Academy, coincidentally passing by the Bounty Assignment Hall.

Checking the Wanted Players list must have become a habit of his after spending over a month doing ‘Bounty Mission’. As if Gu Fei was guided by the Grim Reaper, he entered the hall and took a glance at the Wanted Players list. Discovering a rarely seen, lovely fat lamb worth of 5 PK points in Yunduan City, Gu Fei delightfully laughed. By the time he finished laughing, he was already out of the hall with that ‘Bounty Mission’ on his mission log.

Gu Fei was very experienced when it came to doing ‘Bounty Mission’ and immediately confirmed that the target was within the

city with a glance at the coordinates. He resolved to do this ‘Bounty Mission’ first before starting off his day.

Royal God Call who had completed his one hundred consecutive ‘Bounty Mission’ received a Windchaser’s Emblem of his own, so he returned Gu Fei’s Windchaser’s Emblem right away. With the minute-long refresh rate of the coordinates, Gu Fei quickly determined the direction that his target was heading: the Mage Academy.

Gu Fei felt extremely gratified. He would be able to advance his job class after slaying his target; how very convenient this was! Passing through an alley on his way toward the Mage Academy, he spotted his ‘Bounty Mission’ target just ahead him and abruptly shouted his signature warning: “‘Bounty Mission’! Please leave if you’re not involved!”

The target and several men beside him slowly turned around, suddenly looking extremely emotional. His target even pointed at him while incessantly stuttering, “You – You – You—”

Gu Fei finished his line for his target, “That’s right, it’s you. The rest of you, make way!” Fearing that his target would run off, he quickened his pace for a few steps. When he got close enough to his target, he realized that the person looked quite familiar. Pondering for a moment, he blurted out, “Oh, it’s you! Carouse’s guild leader!”

“Ah, that’s right! It’s me! We’ve met before.” Brave Surge felt pleased that the Mage had recognized him, making it a lot easier to talk to him!

In the end, Gu Fei excitedly rubbed his hands, “So my target is an expert! How exciting!” With that, he took out his Moonlit Nightfalls from his dimensional pocket, gazed at the other men beside Brave Surge, and asked, “Are you guys going to join in?”

The men looked at one another before gazing at Brave Surge.

“Wait a minute!” Brave Surge hurriedly shouted, “We’ve actually been looking for you the entire night!”

“He he... I know,” Gu Fei casually shot his hand out and grabbed hold of a piece of paper flying in the air. Taking a look at it, he recited aloud, “‘Looking for a male Mage who found his way into Amethyst Rebirth Guild. Please contact me if anyone has information about this man. HUGE CASH REWARD AWAITING YOU!’ Mmm... Did you guys distribute all these flyers?”

Brave Surge shook his head, “What you’re holding isn’t ours.” He then used his foot to indicate the posters littering the pavement, “These are ours.”

“Must be tough distributing all that...” Gu Fei remarked sincerely. He had seen quite a lot of these posters on his way here, which meant that these people had put a lot of effort into doing this stuff. Had he not been in a rush, he would have been very willing to entertain these people by following the instructions to contact the person stated on those posters.

“No. It’s all worth it,” Brave Surge humbly replied.

Gu Fei took two steps forward and crooked his head to look at the posters on the ground, “Mmm... This says ‘huge cash reward awaiting you’ as well. How much is that? Now that I’ve delivered myself to you, shouldn’t I have double the reward or something?”

Brave Surge felt stunned before quickly saying, “Yes, that makes sense. Name your price!” In order to show how much he valued this person, Brave Surge decided to please him as best as he could. Handing even 1000 gold coins to him is definitely better than giving it to that Xi Xiaotian. Even if I fail to poach him over, he will at least think highly of me.

However, Gu Fei merely laughed, “What price? I was just pulling your leg.” He then swung his sword about, creating a dark purple streak as it flashed by. “Come!” Gu Fei became focused as he assumed a fighting stance.

“Come what?” Brave Surge asked, shocked.

“‘Bounty Mission’! You’re my target,” Gu Fei replied.

After wasting half a day getting nowhere, Brave Surge almost wanted to faint when he heard Gu Fei’s words. He hurriedly said, “Don’t be in such a rush. Listen to why I’m looking for you first.”

“I know why you’re looking for me. You want to recruit me into your guild! No need to. I’m satisfied with my current guild,” Gu Fei said.

Gu Fei was holed up in the room at the back when Brave Surge went to Ray’s Bar to inquire about him. Naturally, he would have an inkling of why Brave Surge was looking for him.

Brave Surge already knew that it would not be that easy. Even taking the perspective of secular players into consideration, successfully joining an all-female guild could be considered as a dream fulfilled for many of them.

Gu Fei had already attained what he wanted in a guild based on this viewpoint alone, so even a bigger guild would not change his mind. Unless it’s an all-female guild with even more beauties in it.

“Amethyst Rebirth... What’s the point of being in a small guild like that?” Brave Surge decided to emphasize on the all-female guild’s mediocrity to change Gu Fei’s mind.

“You’re right, there’s no particular meaning whatsoever,” Gu Fei nodded his head in agreement.

“So come join our large guild!” Brave Surge was almost jumping out of his skin. Could it be that he had unlocked a special magical power that could change people’s minds with a few simple words?

“A bigger guild would also have no meaning whatsoever,” Gu Fei continued.

Brave Surge woke up to reality as the realization that he had been thinking nonsense hit him, “What do you mean?”

Gu Fei waved the sword in his hand, “Come, already!”

“Oh...” Brave Surge furrowed his brows as he finally saw Gu Fei for what he was: a PvP maniac!

This sort of talent should definitely not stay in that female guild! Brave Surge felt that this was even more so. Staring at Gu Fei with hurried gaze, he said, “Hmm. Since that’s the case, let’s make a wager. We’ll have a duel. If you lose, join my guild; if you win, I’ll —”

“If I win, you’ll head to jail, as simple as that. No need to come up with extra penalty of our own,” Gu Fei interrupted.

“If you win, I’ll give this magic staff to you,” Brave Surge continued as he took out his blue magic staff.

Chapter 173 - Ice and Fire

Gu Fei did not say another word. It was not because Brave Surge's rare magic staff had moved him, but because the opponent would fight him more seriously if there was something big at stake. That would make this PvP all the more meaningful! With that thought in mind, he drew a faint slash in the air with his sword, "Don't be lenient. I don't care if you kill me; I'll still stand by my word." Gu Fei knew from experience that showing leniency would hugely impact the actual strength that anyone could display in a fight.

Brave Surge smiled, "Come, then!"

Few people were online this early in the morning, so the streets were pretty much devoid of any onlookers or passersby. The men accompanying Brave Surge retreated to the side as they quietly surveyed the two men's PvP.

Gu Fei inhaled deeply as his expression turned serious.

Brave Surge was ranked ninth on the Mage leaderboard and was considered as an expert Mage in Parallel World. Gu Fei did not dare treat such a gaming expert like Brave Surge so lightly, as there were many aspects in which he could not beat the latter.

The glow of Brave Surge's magic staff was very eye-catching. It was obviously a top-grade weapon, so his spells could probably insta-kill players, too.

"Fireball! Shoot!" Starting the fight by firing off a ball of fire toward his opponent, Gu Fei darted forward as well.

"Fireball! Shoot!" Brave Surge fired off a ball of fire as well before waving his magic staff once more, "Frozen Ice Trail! Go!"

A soft rippling sound was heard before a one-meter layer of cracked ice formed on the ground. This ice crackled and flew toward Gu Fei's feet.

Gu Fei had never seen such a scene before, so he could not help but feel stunned about it. However, he quickly recovered himself and took two steps to the side. The ice path created by the spell swept past where Gu Fei had been standing moments ago as it reflected the morning sunlight.

“What is that?” Gu Fei curiously asked as he casually swung his sword on the Fireball closing in on him.

“He he... I learned this skill from a scroll. Fireball! Shoot!” Brave Surge answered and summoned another ball of fire. Fireball formed on his fingertips, just in time to block the Fireball Gu Fei had shot at him. The two balls of fire collided and dissipated upon contact.

“That’s no easy feat!” Gu Fei praised. Casting Fireball to block another’s Fireball required excellent eye-hand coordination, which was more difficult than merely dissipating it with a sword.

“I am flattered,” Brave Surge humbly said as he tapped his magic staff on the ground once more, “Frozen Ice Trail! Go!”

Another one-meter length of cracked ice rushed over Gu Fei’s direction and he smilingly dodged to the side, “This spell is pretty nice looking, but it’s a pity that its speed is too slow. How are you ever gonna hit me with it?”

“Arctic Whirlwind! Spin!” Brave Surge merely casted this spell after summoning Frozen Ice Trail.

Gu Fei turned his body to the side to evade this spell as well, yet Brave Surge directed Arctic Whirlwind to Gu Fei’s new direction with a slight move of his magic staff. The caster could manipulate this spell’s movement for a limited amount of time at the cost of mana.

The speed of Arctic Whirlwind was not slow, and even the speedster Svelte Dancer was just barely faster than it. Naturally, Gu Fei who was a lot slower than her could not extricate himself

from this frigid gust.

Furthermore, Brave Surge had a good control of the spell. During their guilds' PvP match, he had flawlessly prevented Svelte Dancer from getting near Young Master Han with Arctic Whirlwind. Right now, it was hardly difficult for Brave Surge to hit Gu Fei with Arctic Whirlwind.

Seeing that he had no means to dodge the spell, Gu Fei decided to cleave the attack with his sword under Twin Incineration. In response, Brave Surge calmly raised his hand to cast Arctic Whirlwind once more and sent it toward Gu Fei.

Gu Fei could tell that things were looking bleak. Fighting mana with mana was a huge problem for him, as he could only cast Twin Incineration four times even with his full mana. Brave Surge must have seen through his weakness and was thus trying to intentionally waste Gu Fei's limited mana.

Arctic Whirlwind was already upon Gu Fei while he was still pondering about the matter at hand. Helpless, he could only cast Twin Incineration once more to take care of it. He then pointed the tip of his sword forward, "Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!"

"He he. You do know that your spell-casting time is very long, right?" Brave Surge asked.

"Of course, I do," Gu Fei answered.

"You can't out-predict me; I guarantee that your spell won't hit me if I remain standing here. Still, I will take two steps forward just to be on the safe side!"

With that, Gu Fei saw the flame wheel appear and descend behind Brave Surge. Looking backward, Brave Surge smilingly remarked, "Indeed, my two steps are unnecessary. Your spell release is very precise."

"You're an expert alright," Gu Fei sighed in awe. With his long casting time, anyone would be able to run away if the person saw

him cast his spell. Therefore, he needed to predict the direction of movement of his opponent before attacking deceptively. Gu Fei had thought that Brave Surge would attempt to dodge his spell by retreating, so he had tossed the flame wheel to a position behind the latter to blast him off for good. Unexpectedly, Brave Surge saw through his ploy.

This had made him feel helpless. Gu Fei's attack was dependent on instinct, while Brave Surge actually considered everything from a logical perspective. Because the Mages' hands or weapons needed to point toward their targets when releasing spells or chanting, veteran Mages like Brave Surge could easily infer where the spells would hit just by looking at the directions the opposing Mages were pointing.

Using the terms in kung fu, Brave Surge's eyes were fast enough, while Gu Fei's hands were too slow. This caused him to miss Brave Surge entirely.

"Arctic Whirlwind! Spin!" Brave Surge once more summoned Arctic Whirlwind.

Gu Fei was ready for it this time and he preemptively sprinted out of its way. He could only cast Twin Incineration once more, so slashing out using it right now would mean that he could no longer use it again after.

The only thing he could do to evade the attack was to close in on Brave Surge before the whirlwind hit him. Alternatively, he could close in on Brave Surge just as Arctic Whirlwind hit him, so that his Twin Incineration would be able to takedown Brave Surge and Arctic Whirlwind together.

Gu Fei thought of these two options as he sprinted forward, yet a few more steps in front was the Frozen Ice Trail that Brave Surge had previously casted. The first path had already disappeared, but the second path was still around. Gu Fei did not dare step on it, so he hopped across it lightly.

It was at this moment that Brave Surge chanted once more, “Frozen Ice Trail! Go!”

The same rippling sound was heard, yet it now possessed a different speed. Frozen Ice Trail instantly covered the spot where Gu Fei would land from his hop. He tried stretching out his legs to avoid landing on the path of cracked ice, yet he was a step too late.

Ice crackled as his feet landed on the icy surface. In the next instant, a chilling sensation traveled up his body from the sole of his feet. His legs promptly became numb and Gu Fei found himself unable to exert the least bit of strength to even shift them by half an inch.

Brave Surge was about to gleefully say a few words when Gu Fei returned the sword to his dimensional pocket and took off Midnight Spirit Robe before pointing to the ground while mumbling something.

“What are you doing?” Brave Surge asked, perplexed. With his Frozen Ice Trail immobilizing Gu Fei on the spot, Brave Surge thought that his victory was as good as decided, so Gu Fei’s weird actions baffled him.

Gu Fei smiled faintly, “I’m chanting!”

“Eh?” As Brave Surge was trying to fathom what Gu Fei meant, flames suddenly sprouted from beneath the latter’s feet and enveloped him entirely.

Suicide? Is he trying to off himself so as to not lose by my hands? Or is he trying to bluff his way out? Brave Surge just thought of this when Gu Fei darted out of the ice trail, causing him to feel dumbfounded.

The spell’s freezing effect should not have been so short, yet Gu Fei seemed to have recovered his speed. Could it be that the Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno he had casted on himself removed Frozen Ice Trail’s freezing effect?

From a logical standpoint, it would make sense for fire to remove the chilling effect of ice with its heat. However, Brave Surge was not sure if the game had this sort of design. Even if the game did have such design, no one would probably do what Gu Fei had just done, considering that Parallel World did not provide players immunity from friendly fire.

The spell's freezing effect and that raging inferno should have inflicted sufficient damage to cause Gu Fei's death, yet he was puzzlingly still alive. Just Fireball could have freed Gu Fei, so why had he casted Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno?

While Brave Surge thought of Gu Fei's spell only removing Frozen Ice Trail's freezing effect, the latter's Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno actually also evaporated the Arctic Whirlwind that was heading his way.

To think someone would think of doing such a thing! Brave Surge did not know whether to laugh or cry at this scene. Gu Fei had already made his way before him, yet Brave Surge did not get flustered and simply stated, "You've lost."

"How so?!" Gu Fei asked, surprised.

"Aren't you out of mana?" Brave Surge smilingly asked.

Casting Fireball once, Twin Incineration twice, Descending Wheel of Flames once, and Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno once, Brave Surge had calculated that Gu Fei's mana should be depleted by now based on their PvP match the other day.

Gu Fei smiled faintly. "I can't beat you in terms of spells since that is never my forte." After saying this, he reached into his dimensional pocket for his Sacred Flames of Baptism and executed a downward cleave.

Brave Surge felt shocked. He had never imagined for this Mage to be such a person. To actually hide a Chinese broadsword for close combat when he was out of mana, he simply did not have the

slightest bearing of a Mage!

As he was thinking of this, the Chinese broadsword had already swung toward him. Brave Surge timely raised his staff to block the blow, yet Gu Fei's downward cleave was actually a feint.

Seeing that he had lured Brave Surge's magic staff away, Gu Fei immediately shifted the blade's path mid-flow and turned the cleave into a horizontal slash along Brave Surge's waist.

Brave Surge felt at ease when he saw that the damage inflicted on him by that one slash was minimal. He actually thought that Gu Fei had some strange ability to his character, yet the damage the latter had inflicted on him proved that melee was not the Mage's forte either.

"Ring of—" Brave Surge was just about to chant for Ring of Fire, yet another speedy slash of Gu Fei interrupted his spell-casting. Not only did Gu Fei interrupt his incantation, the Chinese broadsword also sent forth a fiery glow that ignited Brave Surge's body upon contact.

"Additional fire attack!" Brave Surge exclaimed, stunned. This sort of attack style was popular for a period of time in Yunduan City due to 27149 using this method to crush a Thief.

That player was a Mage from Yunduan City as well....

Brave Surge finally lost his calm demeanor. Could it be that this Mage before him was the same person? If that was really the case, given his ability to destroy a Thief in close combat, it would truly be as he had said moments ago: spells were truly not his forte.

Oh, crap! Brave Surge's spat these two words internally. He tried chanting another spell, yet he was once more interrupted by Gu Fei's Chinese broadsword. The additional fire attack ignited him again. This worried him as a Mage's additional fire attack was not low in the least.

Chapter 174 - An Inhumane Quest

Gu Fei was fast, and his Chinese broadsword was even faster. His every strike was immediately followed by another strike, decorating Brave Surge's entire body with bloody cuts.

Gu Fei's luck was truly down in the dumps today, as Brave Surge still did not die even after receiving many of his strikes. The insufficient proccing of Gu Fei's additional fire attack and the high magic resistant equipment that Brave Surge was wearing for this PvP significantly lowered the damage that Gu Fei could deal on him.

Still, death was just a matter of time for Brave Surge who was powerlessly receiving all of Gu Fei's attacks.

Brave Surge's several companions had thought at first that Gu Fei would easily be dealt with once he entered Brave Surge's personal range, but what had happened in the end was the complete opposite of their expectation. Braze Surge was the one being handled easily by Gu Fei at close range, and all his attempts at spell-chanting were easily interrupted by the latter.

These men exchanged looks. To help or not to help, that was the question!

This duel was suggested by Brave Surge, so them aiding their guild leader now that he was losing the fight would be as good as slapping Brave Surge's mouth. Hesitating for quite a while, they finally despondently chose to not aid their guild leader.

Gu Fei was currently one with his sword, and he went about cutting Brave Surge with great delight. In fact, his eyes reflected dejection when Brave Surge finally turned into a beam of white light. I could have executed all the moves in my Nine Blades of Tang's Duanlang Third Style with just two more cuts. Such a pity! Gu Fei shook his head in regret.

Returning his sword inside his dimensional pocket, Gu Fei glanced at his HP and saw that it was in the red with only a few numbers away from zero. Brave Surge did not even need to cast spells; just a rap of his magic staff would knock Gu Fei back into the Mage Academy.

That was a close shave, indeed! Gu Fei sighed repeatedly. Fortunately, he was doing 'Bounty Mission' and was thus wearing the Windchaser's Emblem and not Eddie's Emblem. Had he been equipping Eddie's Emblem, the accessory's additional 6 points to Intelligence would have raised his Magic Attack Power a bit more, causing the Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno he had used before to burn his bit of HP off and essentially scorch off Gu Fei's chance to make it out alive of the ensuing conflagration.

Gu Fei noted some learning points from the recent PvP in his mind as he replenished his HP by eating the loaf of bread that he had taken out of his dimensional pocket. With all these done, he turned his gaze over to those Carouse's observers. Although the men displayed a shocked expression on their faces, they did not move to attack Gu Fei.

They truly have an upright personality! Gu Fei felt disappointed by this, as he was really hoping for them to be scoundrels that would try to avenge their guild leader's death.

"Are you guys really alright with this? I'm leaving if there's nothing else," Gu Fei was truly unwilling to give up another chance to PvP.

The men merely shook their heads.

"I'm leaving, then," Gu Fei dejectedly waved goodbye to these men.

"Wait a sec, bro. Can you tell us your name?" someone among Brave Surge's buddies asked.

"Thousand Miles Drunk," Gu Fei answered.

The person nodded his head, and they sent Gu Fei off toward the Mage Academy with their eyes alone.

The Mage Academy was quite deserted this early in the morning. Gu Fei walked directly to the NPC instructor who was programmed to teach Mages new spells at certain levels. Seeing that Gu Fei was now at level 40, the NPC instructor promptly asked him if he wanted to do his Job Class Advancement, and Gu Fei replied to this in the affirmative.

The instructor then gave him the Job Class Advancement quest. The invincible PK expert Gu Fei was momentarily stunned by the quest he had just been given.

It was a very simple quest, yet it utterly revealed the game company's true intention, as it only required one thing: money.

No task was needed to be done to complete the Job Class Advancement, and a player only had to pay the fee of 200 gold coins to advance his or her job class. This sum was neither plentiful nor insignificant; the problem was that Gu Fei currently did not have it. To be precise, the 37 gold coins, 21 silver coins, and 8 copper coins that he was carrying right now was not enough.

The two successful deals that Young Master's Elite mercenary group had had during Parallel World's open beta days made Gu Fei quite the rich man, and this resulted into him not realizing the significance of in-game currency. After all, the large money he had acquired early on allowed him to survive until this day without having to worry about the content of his coin purse and to splurge on fruits for his limited amount of mana.

Now that he was facing the system's lion appetite through the required fee for the Job Class Advancement, Gu Fei finally realized how meager the content of his coin purse.

Gu Fei left the Mage Academy dejectedly. Remembering that he still had not submitted the result of his 'Bounty Mission', Gu Fei activated his Windchaser's Emblem and teleported himself into

the Bounty Assignment Hall. With the mission accomplished, he was given the corresponding reward of money and experience points. Gu Fei would usually feel satisfied with the paltry monetary reward for the 'Bounty Mission', but due to the Job Class Advancement fee of 200 gold coins, he suddenly thought that the system was being very stingy.

"I spent a long time slaying the target almost at the cost of my life, yet I was only awarded these few coins? This is truly inhumane!" Gu Fei complained to a nearby player who was in the process of choosing a mission.

The man turned his head over to glance at Gu Fei, "Oh, yeah. Doing 'Bounty Mission' is extremely risky, yet the reward is really meager."

"No wonder it is virtually deserted here; no one wishes to do these missions," Gu Fei remarked as he looked all around him. Besides Gu Fei and the man next to him, the entire hall was devoid of people.

"You're not wrong," The person replied, adding, "But do you know that in our city, there's this one guy who is really passionate about doing this trashy 'Bounty Mission'? He would come here every day just to do it."

"Oh? Have you seen him?"

"No, it's just a rumor I've heard. They said he is a Mage dressed in black robe. His weapon of choice is a sword, which seems pretty powerful. That's quite an impressive person, so I don't understand why he would idiotically keep on doing these trashy missions," The person wondered aloud as he chose a mission, turning his head to face Gu Fei.

It was at this point that the man realized that the person he had been talking to all this while was a Mage wearing a black robe. Gu Fei reached into his dimensional pocket and took out a purple sword, extending it until it was just inches away from the man's

eyes, “Is this the sword you are talking about?”

“Of course not!” The man blustered, “Actually, doing ‘Bounty Mission’ is very meaningful. See how I’m also doing it right now? Alright, I’ve got a mission to do. I’m leaving now!” The man then disappeared in a flash, leaving the depressed Gu Fei by himself inside the deserted hall.

Money! Where can I earn some money?! Gu Fei exited the hall while tossing this question all about his head.

This thing called money could truly affect people’s harmonious relationship, as Gu Fei started to resent Young Master Han. To only have two completed transactions all this time, We have only completed two requests from others even till now... Is he even serious about managing the mercenary group’s business properly?!

The thought of ‘business’ suddenly sparked an idea inside Gu Fei: He could sell the many miscellaneous items he had acquired from his past monster grinding sessions!

As these looted items would easily cause him to suffer a loss if he tried selling them via the Auction House (author’s note: refer to Chapter 100 for the reason), he would have to set up a stall and hawk those items if he wished to earn anything back from them. Since Gu Fei was in need of money, it made perfect sense for him to try his hand at being a merchant.

With this thought in mind, Gu Fei made his way toward the warehouse near the entrance to Yunduan City. Arriving there, he quickly checked his storage box and saw the many items he had accumulated over time. Fortunately, he had later focused on doing ‘Bounty Mission’ instead of monster grinding. If not, his storage would have run out of space long ago.

Gu Fei took out a burlap sack and started stuffing all the items in his storage into it. This burlap sack of his had quite a history.

Back when Gu Fei was second on the leveling efficiency

leaderboard, he used to store all the items he had looted while grinding into this burlap sack. After a past misunderstanding, this burlap sack came to be in possession of June's Rain. Afterward, she used it to store food and drinks on their way to Yueye City. It was only before the start of Parallel World's event that June's Rain returned from Yueye City to Yunduan City and handed over this burlap sack to its original owner.

Gu Fei could recall the days he had diligently spent grinding on monsters with this burlap sack and it filled him with plenty of emotions.

Filling the sack as best as he could, Gu Fei unsteadily made his way toward Peddlers' Street 2. Along the way, he excitedly calculated: One piece of equipment was about 10 gold coins, and two would make it 20 gold coins. If there were twenty, then he would make 200 gold coins!

Everywhere in the game was deserted so early in the morning, but there was one place that was the exception and that was the Peddlers' Street 2.

This street was formed after the game had officially been released. It was partly because Peddlers' Street 1, the first street that was used for doing transactions among players, was occupied by veteran players ever since the days open beta and the items they sold were of higher quality, so a majority of the new players could only feel frustrated at the high prices of the in-game goods.

Eventually, the newer players formed a marketplace that would cater to their needs, which was how Peddlers' Street 2 came to be. The development of this street was fast because the newer players were extremely passionate about playing the game, and the numbers of new players far exceeded the numbers of veteran players. This resulted into Peddlers' Street 2 having a steady stream of players looking to hawk off their goods or buy affordable in-game items. Although Peddlers' Streets 3 and 4 also came to be, the Peddlers' Street 2 remained as bustling as ever.

All the players in Yunduan City knew that if one wanted to hawk goods at the dead of the night or the wee hours of the morning, the Peddlers' Street 2 would be the best place to do so, as it was the only street that remained lively at any given time of the day.

Gu Fei had long heard of the Peddlers' Street 2, but this was the first time he visited it. The rumors were indeed true; while everywhere else would be deserted at certain times of the day, the Peddlers' Street 2 would always be crowded as ever.

Because it was still in the morning, the players in Peddlers' Street 2 had the same drowsy expression on their faces. Upon closer inspection, Gu Fei noted that this drowsy expression on the players' faces could be grouped into two: One group might look drowsy and bleary eyed, yet this group was in high spirits; this group must be consisted of players who had just woken up and crawled into the game. The other group looked drowsy and sleepy as a result of lethargy, not even having the strength to speak; clearly, this group was consisted of players who had played the game the entire night and had yet to head to bed.

Gu Fei walked along the street as he searched for an empty spot to set up his stall. Gu Fei's burlap sack was truly filled to the brim unlike the average players, so a normal spot would not do for him at all.

After walking around for one quarter of the whole lane, Gu Fei finally spotted a larger empty spot. Quickening his pace, he staked his claim on it and promptly dumped the content of his burlap sack onto the ground. Gu Fei's items spilled all over the ground, with quite a few of them even bouncing all the way to the middle of the street.

"WOW!" The eyes of the many players around, especially the two standing behind their stalls next to Gu Fei's, were immediately attracted by the loud noise.

The items Gu Fei had brought piled like a small mountain. The

two players only had small stalls with few items on display, making their offering seem meager in comparison to Gu Fei's.

Chapter 175 - Gu Fei, the Merchant

Accumulating a large amount of products and selling them in one shot was actually something that the ‘merchants’ or business-minded players would only do during special occasions. A good example was when Parallel World transitioned from an open beta game to a full-fledged game, where a large influx of players entering the game had increased the demand for certain goods and subsequently caused the prices of items to inflate. Recognizing it as a great opportunity to earn a handsome profit, the business-minded players seized the chance to hoard all the low-cost items during the open beta period, only to sell them at high prices after the game was officially released.

But since the players themselves were the number one consumers and [farmers](#) of items in Parallel World, the prices of in-game goods had only spiked for a short duration. The top-level veteran players were able to exploit this special situation first, while low-level veteran players were behind by quite a bit. Top-grade equipment was of course more expensive, so not many players could hoard a lot in bulk. Therefore, many merchants had chosen to accumulate mid-level equipment, instead.

Logically speaking, once the newbie players reached a higher level, they could of course farm for better equipment by themselves instead of buying from merchants. The same equipment could be acquired by either looting from the higher level monsters or obtaining rewards from the harder quests, so the price increase for mid-level equipment only saw a temporary spike of a few days.

When these new players were capable of farming better items for themselves and increased the availability of these items, the prices of goods naturally deflated. Even if the prices did not fall in response to the increase in the supply of in-game goods, increasing the item prices would be hard pressed anyhow.

‘Buying low, selling high’ might seem like a simple concept, yet a lot of knowledge was actually attached to it.

In fact, few players could make use of this concept properly, as seen by how the poor greatly outnumbered the rich inside the game.

Not everyone had a full grasp on the ‘buying low, selling high’ concept, thus their incapability to apply the proper business strategies to actually profit from it, and a sizeable portion of those players who had employed this concept ended up with more items than what they managed to sell off.

The rules of online games were ever-changing, especially when it came to beginner items that would lose their value once the players leveled up further. At the moment, the prices of these beginner items had already hit an all-time low, and those who tried increasing the prices for these items were bound to earn no profit at all. This was because of the existence of the official tradings managed by the system, and the competition was stiff among the system and the merchants when it came to the better market prices for items.

The players with a good eye could tell that the pile of items Gu Fei had just dumped on the ground were mostly for low-level players, causing them to immediately associate Gu Fei to those loser resale merchants that had missed to catch the wave of buyers back then. Just the fact that this person had kept all these trashy items until now was truly a failure among failures! Thus, a whole crowd of men soon gleefully regarded Gu Fei as a lousy merchant without a shred of sympathy.

The new generation of players hated those resellers who had exploited the chance to earn their money, while the veteran players were jealous that the resellers had seized the opportunity to gain some cash. But the one thing these two types of people shared in common was how they would feel a touch of schadenfreude whenever they saw a reseller failing to sell his or

her products.

These two types of people were actually the representation of all in-game players, and right now, everyone in Peddlers' Street 2 was hoping to witness how the loser merchant Gu Fei would make a fool of himself by selling these trashy items.

Gu Fei who did not know about this was currently feeling quite pleased that he had received the surrounding players' undivided attention, thinking that his business would likely see a great success. With that positive thought in mind, he squatted down and began to carefully tidy up the equipment on the ground.

Although the equipment in Parallel World had no level requirement, it was pretty obvious which grade it belonged to based on the equipment's trait value. By knowing the additional traits the equipment had, its worth could be determined.

The items Gu Fei had on hand were all blue tier. There was simply no market price for white-tier equipment unless it was of a high grade.

Blue-tier equipment was the most commonly seen items, so a majority of the normal players had full blue-tier gear at the very least. Players usually began the game by equipping themselves from top to bottom with blue-tier gear, and they would slowly try replacing their blue-tier equipment with gold tier one by one by doing all sorts of tradings or quests. As for the purple-tier equipment, the current players could only fantasize about ever attaining one.

Gu Fei quickly sorted out his for-sale items into various slots according to their type. Headgear, chest pieces, weapons, body accessories, footwear – every slot possible filled up the space before Gu Fei. Nodding his head in satisfaction, he wiped the sweat off his forehead and lifted his head.

Many players were watching what Gu Fei was doing, so he quickly flashed them an amiable smile, “Are you interested in any

of these pieces of equipment?”

All cheerfully shook their heads. Gu Fei's smile somewhat became stiff, which made everyone even happier.

The items Gu Fei had on display were obsolete, so none here had any need for them. And even if they did, they would not buy them from him. Peddler's Street 2 was long; what Gu Fei had were common items, and many peddlers were hawking similar wares. With the let-this-guy-suffer-this-loss-to-death mentality, everyone walked away. Nonetheless, quite a few of them stayed to soak in on the pleasurable sight of Gu Fei's frustrated look.

Gu Fei was at a loss. Are my items really that obsolete? he could not help but think of this. Most of the items he was selling were drops of level 20 to 30 monsters, which were considered to be pretty low grade as far as equipment went.

Still, he had seen that the stalls lining this very lane had similar common-grade equipment to his, which meant that the items were not completely unmarketable.

I'll just wait patiently! With such a thought in mind, Gu Fei no longer felt anxious and even found himself a comfortable sitting position to patiently wait for customers.

The common sound that could be heard in Peddlers' Street 2 was the haggling of players. As Gu Fei quietly waited for customers, he listened to the players' bartering to gain a better market insight.

Gu Fei had not done any research regarding the pricing of his equipment, as he was only planning to sell every item for 10 gold coins until he obtained the 200 gold coins he needed. But after listening to the haggling all around him, Gu Fei now more or less had an idea of how much his items on hand were currently worth and his pile of obsolete items was hardly worth 10 gold coins each. A nearby stall was selling a pair of footwear for only 8 gold coins even when it had better traits than any of the items Gu Fei had on display. Comparing the traits of his items with the other

merchants' successfully sold items, Gu Fei finally realized how naive he was at item tradings.

Even if he managed to sell off his pile of items, he might not even make 50 gold coins in total. To reach that goal of 200 gold coins, he would have to make a few trips back to the warehouse.

Gu Fei treated selling items just like how he treated his stat point allocation: he only cared for speed. Gu Fei cared not even if he incurred a loss and merely wanted to quickly gather the 200 gold coins he needed for his Job Class Advancement. Fueled by this thought, he raised his voice and said, "Dollar stall here! Every item is only going for 1 gold coin; buy it if you want it!"

Low-priced goods would always be the most tempting items in a marketplace. That one shout of Gu Fei caused many players to bound toward him immediately. Even some of the players who had their stalls set up came by and had a look.

Gu Fei felt delighted as he began calculating in his mind: One piece of equipment for 1 gold coin, so 200 pieces of equipment would give me 200 gold coins! That should be about everything I have in my storage. Just a few more trips and 200 gold coins won't be an issue anymore.

Unexpectedly, he was still being too optimistic. The players who had been enticed by his 'dollar stall' call carefully examined the items in Gu Fei's stall and almost all of them quickly shook their heads and departed.

It would not matter how cheap the items were if they had no need for them. Furthermore, the items Gu Fei was selling were odds and ends that did not have any worth in 'buying low and selling high'.

Quite a few players had come with such a thought in mind, yet they could only leave dispiritedly once they realized that nothing was of value in Gu Fei's stall.

Some players remained, yet they were all beginners. Since equipment in Parallel World had no level requirement, outfitting themselves with above level 20 gear was very tempting to these beginners. Nonetheless, such fresh players would not be that rich and would have silver and copper coins at most. As such, they resolutely haggled with Gu Fei for that 1 gold coin.

Gu Fei stiffly said, "It's already cheap enough as it is, it can't be any cheaper!" This caused three potential customers to leave.

The remaining two patiently attempted to wear down Gu Fei. Just the term 'big bro' had been tossed about so frivolously by these two customers. In the end, Gu Fei finally came up with a 'buy three, get one free' sales pitch, allowing them to only spend 3 gold coins and obtain four items from Gu Fei. The two customers happily left with their successful transactions.

All that just to earn 6 gold coins... Gu Fei emotionally took out his money pouch and placed the 6 gold coins inside it, lowering his head to count his money again. Regrettably, Gu Fei did not miscount earlier. He only had 43 gold coins on him right now, 157 gold coins away from his target of 200 gold coins.

"Are you selling any of these items for 1 gold coin?" A voice suddenly asked Gu Fei as he was counting his money.

"Ah, yes!" Gu Fei hurriedly replied as he raised his head to face the customer.

"It's you!" The two said the same thing simultaneously.

The person who was asking about the price was actually Vast Lushness. Gu Fei felt surprised to meet someone he was familiar with in Peddlers' Street 2 of all places, while Vast Lushness felt puzzled that the man who had previously helped her out of a difficult situation on the outskirts of Yunduan City was actually poor. He was an expert who had easily sliced up six players, after all. In online MMOs, most experts were wealthy. Although this was not an absolute fact, they at least would not be this poor.

Vast Lushness was truly surprised to find Gu Fei in such a destitute state that he had to sell a whole pile of trashy items for 1 gold coin each. Why is he here selling these trinkets? With how powerful he is, wouldn't it be faster for him to earn money by farming for high-grade items from high-level monsters?

The method that Vast Lushness had come up with was truly the most appropriate path to riches that Gu Fei should have taken. Everything in MMOs was dependent on level. As long as a player was at a high level, he or she would have first-rate farming capabilities when it came to making money.

This was especially true if a player was able to farm the highest grade equipment. Player who could do this would be able to conquer the peak of the market. In fact, quite a lot of gaming experts made it rich through this method.

Equipment in Parallel World had no level requirement; this design made such a path to riches all the more attractive to everyone.

Unfortunately, the players were unable to pull ahead too drastically because leveling was also extremely difficult. Thus, not many people could easily walk this path toward prosperity. As for Gu Fei, he indeed have the ability to do so and was also capable of beating monsters twenty levels above his.

Farming is a term used for players who – well – ‘farm’ or ‘acquire’ items. This is especially true for gold farmers (currency grinders) and item farmers (who usually auction the items they get for more in-game currency).

Chapter 176 - A Unique and Outstanding Player

Vast Lushness did not express her puzzlement. The online gaming community was full of outstandingly unique individuals, after all. Compared to Ray who had used real-world currency to open a bar in Parallel World, Gu Fei's action was still considered as normal.

After feeling surprised at this chance meeting, Gu Fei quickly recovered his business-like attitude and warmly greeted the customer before him, "Take a look and see if you have anything you want!"

Vast Lushness squatted down and carefully inspected each of the items on display.

Gu Fei felt bored as she inspected his wares, so he used his Appraisal skill on Vast Lushness. She was currently at level 31 with common-grade equipment and empty accessory slots. Even an average level 31 player would not be in such a state. Since he knew Vast Lushness had once been a level 30 illustrious figure, Gu Fei found this strange, "Why are your equipment slots empty?"

Vast Lushness, who continued to inspect the items in his stall, lifted her head and looked at him, "I lost it all when I got slain."

"How many times have you gotten slain?" Gu Fei curiously asked. A player would drop a whole level every time he or she died in this game. Killing people until they lost all their equipment was not easy, as they could no longer be bullied into a PvP once they reached level 10.

"I've been getting hunted for over a month, so I've already lost count," Vast Lushness was truly a tenacious person; she did not count death by the number of times she died but by the number of times she had been hunted to death.

“Shouldn’t you be at level 10?” Gu Fei asked, perplexed.

Vast Lushness glanced at Gu Fei in surprise, “Levels can be grinded again!”

“So you grinded your way up, only to be killed by them again?” Gu Fei pressed on.

“Should I be afraid of them, instead?” Vast Lushness answered him with a question.

For a Priest to stubbornly struggle under such a situation, Gu Fei could tell how strong-willed she was! Sighing in admiration, he asked her another question, “Are they not chasing you now?”

“Not after that time outside Yunduan City. Maybe they’ve gotten lazy, or they are busy with the game’s PvP event,” Vast Lushness replied.

“Oh...” Gu Fei merely nodded his head.

Vast Lushness continued to rummage through the equipment as she said, “I’ve yet to properly thank you for last time.”

“You’ve already thanked me,” Gu Fei reminded her. Vast Lushness had humbly said, “Thank you... Thank you...” over and over again last time when Gu Fei told her where Silver Moon was, which was a far cry from her tyrannical personality in Yueye City.

“I mean that time by the prison entrance. I’m grateful that you told me what you had heard,” Vast Lushness clarified.

“It’s nothing,” Gu Fei said, asking, “Did you manage to meet him?”

“No.”

“No?” Gu Fei was mildly surprised. He did not remember hearing any other ways in and out of the prison besides the main entrance.

“I left not too long later after you did,” Vast Lushness explained.

“Oh?”

“The truth is I had a hunch on exactly why he had been avoiding me... and yet I still tried chasing after him just so I could hear it from himself... But then I thought, why should I continue fooling myself if even an outsider like you could tell the truth?” Vast Lushness said numbly.

Gu Fei did not comment. Out of courtesy to a fellow human being, he told Vast Lushness what he had found out inside the prison. As for what she would do next, Gu Fei knew that he had no say in it.

While Vast Lushness had clearly put all her heart into her and Silver Moon’s relationship despite it being just a game, Silver Moon had always carried the mentality that everything here was but a game!

“That’s why I ought to thank you properly,” Vast Lushness said. Evidently, her gratefulness to Gu Fei toward this matter was even more sincere than when he had saved her from being killed before. With her not fearing death or getting hunted by men, Vast Lushness had only felt superficial gratitude toward Gu Fei for saving her life before, so her thanking him for that was actually just a polite gesture and nothing more. As for the matter with Silver Moon, Vast Lushness had truly felt genuine thankfulness for his kind gesture toward her.

Gu Fei of course did not feel that his action was very amazing to be worthy of someone’s deep gratitude, so he simply said, “Don’t worry about that.”

“Let’s add each other as friends!” Vast Lushness suggested.

Gu Fei was not bothered by her request in the least. Nodding his head in agreement, he opened up his friends list and allowed her to add him. The system then notified him: [Player Vast Lushness has added you as a friend.]

“Once I make it rich, I’ll treat you to a round of drinks. From your IGN, I’m sure you love to drink,” Vast Lushness said to Gu Fei

while smiling wryly.

Even Gu Fei was getting tired of telling others about the origin of his IGN, so he merely said, “No need for that.”

“You said you had seen me in Yueye City; when was that?” Vast Lushness asked.

“I used to be Fugitive 27149,” Gu Fei honestly replied.

Clank! The emblem that Vast Lushness had just picked up loudly clattered to the ground. She raised her head and fixed Gu Fei a fierce stare. She had been conversing with him all this while with her eyes on the items he had on display.

Before either of them could say another word, a stifled laughter was heard from the player beside them.

“Sorry! I didn’t mean to eavesdrop on you two,” the person hurriedly apologized, adding mischievously, “Pretty lady from Yueye City, you should know that Yunduan City’s Mages like to fashion themselves as Fugitive 27149 whenever they are chasing skirts....”

Gu Fei felt amused by this as he had never heard of it before, “And? What’s the result of their attempts?”

The person sighed deeply, “None has actually succeeded in scoring with ladies. In fact, they all got killed just for claiming that they were that guy!”

“Why’s that?” Gu Fei asked.

“Fugitive 27149 is an expert! All the pretty ladies want to see what he’s made up of. You have to get close to a lady to flirt, right? If someone wants to test your skill as a Mage at close range, it’s almost the same as you signing up for your own death!” The person explained while laughing.

“Ha ha ha ha! How pitiful of them!” Gu Fei laughed as well.

Vast Lushness did not join this exchange. She could tell that Gu

Fei was not trying to flirt with her using that silly method and was telling the truth. This meant that he truly was once Fugitive 27149.

“So how is it? Do you still wanna treat me to a drink?” Gu Fei addressed Vast Lushness once he had his laugh.

“I’ve already said it, so it counts,” Vast Lushness replied evenly.

Gu Fei merely smiled.

“But! I originally wanted to treat you to some high quality liquor till you have your fill; now, I’ll only buy you one glass of the most common alcoholic drink available. We’ll then consider the matter between us as settled; what do you think?” Vast Lushness asked.

“Forget about the drink; just buy one of my items now!” Gu Fei bargained.

“Are you really in need of money?” Vast Lushness asked, surprised. The cheapest glass of liquor was only at 10 copper coins. She had initially thought that Gu Fei had set up this stall as a hobby, yet he was actually attempting to earn some money from it.

Gu Fei glumly nodded his head.

“Why aren’t you farming for high-grade equipment, then? Won’t it take much longer for you to sell all these junks?” Vast Lushness asked.

“I’m in a hurry and I thought that selling equipment here would be quick!” As Gu Fei said that, he suddenly jumped up and shouted, “Oh, crap!”

“What’s the matter?” Vast Lushness asked. Gu Fei’s shout made the surrounding players jump in fright as well.

“Help me look after this stall; I’ll be right back,” Gu Fei quickly hopped out from behind the stall as Vast Lushness received a system message: [Thousand Miles Drunk has set you as the stall owner.]

While any players could set up a stall whenever they pleased in

all the Peddlers' Streets, the merchants were still under the system's protection. If not, all the Peddlers' Streets could easily turn into Robbers' Streets.

"Where are you off to?" Vast Lushness was at a loss.

"The P.E. session is about to start; I'll be back soon!" Gu Fei said as he sprinted off.

"What?" Vast Lushness became even more clueless.

Gu Fei hurriedly ran to a safe zone and went offline. He then rushed out of his house and arrived at the school's field.

Music played on speaker as the students made their way toward the field. Gu Fei sighed in relief; at least, he was not late for work.

That was right. Although physical education teachers did not have classes in the morning, supervising the students' morning and assembly exercises was still part of their job. Gu Fei rushed between the two worlds precisely because of the assembly exercise....

He entered the game once more after he was done with his duty at school. When he got to Peddlers' Street 2, he spotted someone arguing with Vast Lushness by his stall.

"Why are you selling all these for 1 gold coin? That's quite the loss. Babe, you could sell this ring here for 2 or 3 gold coins! This dagger has decent traits to it, so 5 gold coins should be the right price for it. As for these..." The person pointed to a few other items and said, "They're not even worth 1 gold coin each! Sigh... Must be tough for you to sell things here... Actually, I happen to need a Priest for my level grinding. Babe, how's your skill? Why don't you join me on my level grinding? We can sell some high-grade equipment together after we farm them. I'm now at level 40. With you aiding me as a Priest, we shan't have problems fighting monsters five levels higher. Since the monsters are ten levels higher than yours, you'll get lots of experience as well as high-

grade equipment. What a great deal, it is! So are you in?"

The person chattered incessantly, looking as if he was trying to abduct a naive and unworldly teenage girl. Vast Lushness was only at level 31 with trashy equipment. Given how she was also currently selling a pile of trashy items at a low price, she completely fit the above descriptions.

Unfortunately, the man was dead wrong. After saying so many flowery words, Vast Lushness simply rolled her eyes, "Your tricks won't work on me."

The man felt stunned as he realized that his intentions had been seen through. Unexpectedly, he sulkily said, "Looks like babe isn't a newbie, after all!"

As Vast Lushness flashed him a cold smile, the man continued, "Then, you should know better that there's no future selling these items, right? Come and grind with me! Seeing how low your level is, you must be lacking the help of an expert during level grinding, right?" He suddenly felt a presence behind him as he was trying to convince Vast Lushness. Turning his head backward, he saw Gu Fei standing behind him, "It's you!"

Before Gu Fei could reply, the man was already patting him on the shoulder and saying, "Bro, I saw her first so I got the dibs on her. Don't mess things up for me! Besides, you already have the entire Amethyst Rebirth to yourself; is there a need to busy yourself with more? Anyway, it's first come, first served basis here!"

Deplorable! He is too d*mn deplorable! Gu Fei cried inside him.

Chapter 177 - The System's Misplaced Money

The man before Gu Fei was Sakurazaka Moony, the founder of the Forever in Flowers Guild. When it came to men, Sakurazaka Moony was definitely the most detestable sort that he had encountered. What actually angered Gu Fei more was that this deplorable man looked more innocuous and cuter than Royal God Call.

Gu Fei's presence made Sakurazaka Moony anxious. In his eyes, a man who could mix into a pure women guild like fish in water would be akin to a legendary love god; such a fierce competitor was something he did not want to face. This was why he had blabbered on upon seeing Gu Fei. Gu Fei had yet to say a word, but Sakurazaka Moony's voice already sounded his insecurity and uncertainty.

Gu Fei looked at him then at Vast Lushness, not knowing what to say.

Vast Lushness had been in this situation many times in the past as a beautiful gamer. Standing up, she unperturbedly said to Gu Fei, "I'm returning the stall to you." With that, he received the system notification for the stall's transfer of ownership.

Sakurazaka Moony gawked at the two of them, "You two know each other?"

Gu Fei nodded his head. He was now behind the stall, while Vast Lushness was back on the street.

"You're too much! Are you trying to catch all the babes for yourself?!" Sakurazaka Moony angrily asked.

Gu Fei lowered his head. He felt that answering this man's question was the same as stooping to his level.

"I'm leaving!" Vast Lushness had been treating Sakurazaka Moony like air all this while. Waving goodbye to Gu Fei, she

hurriedly left. Sakurazaka Moony immediately chased after her and continued to pester her, “Babe, what’s your name? My name’s Sakurazaka Moony. You can call me Zakie!”

Gu Fei hurriedly explained to the merchants on his left and right, “I don’t know that guy.”

“Mhm!” The two players vaguely acknowledged Gu Fei’s words. They were currently feeling nauseated at the sight unfolding before them.

Vast Lushness finally exploded, “You’re NOISY. Stop following me!” A lady experiencing the adoration of a male player would feel honored in other circumstances, but it was a different case altogether if the admirer was someone like Sakurazaka Moony.

Sakurazaka Moony remained persistent, though. Few beautiful women played Parallel World, and a natural beauty like Vast Lushness was even harder to find. Thus, Sakurazaka Moony was not planning to give up on wooing her, unless his skull got bashed in beyond recovery. “Where do you wanna go, babe? I’ll accompany you... You’re from Yueye City, so you must be unfamiliar here. I’ll take you for a tour! There’s a lake with great view on the outskirts of Yunduan City; wanna go there and have a look?” Sakurazaka Moony smile lasciviously. Every player in Yunduan City knew of what people mainly did over by Yunjiao Lakeside.

“Scram! SCRAM!” Vast Lushness took out her healing staff and drove Sakurazaka Moony away with it.

It seemed that Sakurazaka Moony had the knack for annoying a lady, as he actually drove the Priest Vast Lushness into using her staff like a rod to beat him up. He was even cheekily snickering as he dodged her staff, “Where are we going? Is it Yunjiao Lakeside?”

Vast Lushness went mad at this! She would not even bat an eye when she killed people. Right now, she wished to shred Sakurazaka Moony into pieces. But she was a Priest, so she would

not be able to kill him even if her level was the same as him. “Just kill me already!” She screamed in frustration instead as she waved her staff viciously.

“Why would I do that? I wanna protect you. It’s quite dangerous for a Priest like you to roam Yunduan City alone. After all, there are many bad men, especially lewd ones, around here!” Sakurazaka Moony clearly did not intend to retaliate at her, yet he was so brazen that everyone was sweating in anxiety!

Vast Lushness tried to flee, but Sakurazaka Moony caught up to her with his faster speed than Gu Fei’s, “Shall I take your hand? You can move faster that way.”

Vast Lushness chose to ignore him. Her eyes stared fixedly ahead as if she was on her own.

Sakurazaka Moony was unfazed by this and continued to walk beside her.

“Bro, you’re so persistent!” Someone sighed in admiration to Sakurazaka Moony.

Sakurazaka Moony smiled as he stopped walking and said loudly, “Never take ‘no’ for an answer! Never give up!” He then hurried forward, leaving a very flabbergasted crowd behind.

Gu Fei was the most stunned among all these people as he personally knew the two. Vast Lushness was a very vicious player, yet her non-combat job class prevented her from duking it out with Sakurazaka Moony. As for Sakurazaka Moony, he would never kill a lady even with Vast Lushness’ personality. His audacious declaration just now was a testament to how thick-skinned he was.

Vast Lushness, you’ve finally met your match today, Gu Fei sighed to himself, unsure if this meeting was a blessing or a curse.

It was definitely a curse for Gu Fei, as Sakurazaka Moony had virtually disrupted his business. Vast Lushness would have bought

four to five pieces of equipment from Gu Fei had she not been chased off by that detestable man.

That scoundrel! Gu Fei muttered to himself. Taking out his coin purse, he counted his money once more. Counting money again and again was a common act to everyone when he or she wished for the money to magically increase in quantity. Naturally, that was something that would never come true. Nothing had changed, as his coin purse still contained only 43 gold coins.

Sigh! Gu Fei dejectedly exhaled as he reached into his dimensional pocket, trying to search for some loose coins. This search actually caused him to freeze up. When his hand came out of his dimensional pocket, Gu Fei was holding a dark red coin purse.

The person who had designed Parallel World's dimensional pocket must be a fan of Doraemon. When players reached into their dimensional pockets, they could only rely on their sense of touch. Fortunately, the items could be sorted into slots inside the dimensional pocket. As long as the players arranged their items properly, they could reach into the designated spots and retrieve the items they needed.

Few items were stored inside the players' dimensional pockets in the early stages of the game, so taking out items was easy for them. But as days went by, the dimensional pockets began to fill up and the players would now often make mistakes when taking out things. Situations where a player pulled out a loaf of bread instead of a sword happened quite often, resulting into much laughter.

Thus, many players made it a habit to properly arrange the items inside their dimensional pockets and practiced the art of quickly pulling out weapons or items.

Gu Fei was already an expert when it came to taking out items from his dimensional pocket without taking out the wrong items. But the thing was, he was so used to using the same few slots that

he never realized another coin purse had somehow appeared inside one of the slots that he seldom placed items into.

He could not make sense of how he had acquired this coin purse. Gu Fei had never counted his money until today, so he had never been fully aware of all his assets. He would only grab out his coin purse from its designated slot when he had something to pay.

The coin purse in-game worked exactly like a safety deposit box. As long as the coin purse contained money, his hand would always grab something when he reached inside it. Gu Fei did just that and managed to grab quite a lot inside his deep red coin purse. His eyes widened as the count increased to a total of 429 gold coins.

The large amount of gold coins allowed Gu Fei to remember where he had acquired it. It was his previous winnings from inside the prison!

Gu Fei had won this large sum from playing dice with Silver Moon and his accomplices while serving time inside the prison.

He did not know why the system had seen it fit to store these coins in a separate money pouch, but it had caused him to miss them entirely. Misplacing money was a good habit that would create sudden surprise. Gu Fei elatedly thought that the system was so nice to have done this for him.

Now that Gu Fei was rich again, he no longer had to stick to this merchant life. Selling the pile of items to the player beside him for 20 gold coins, he walked off with his hands folded behind his head.

He went back to the Mage Academy and paid the Job Class Advancement fee of 200 gold coins. The NPC instructor beamingly told Gu Fei that he could now choose between Water Affinity Initiation or Lightning Affinity Initiation.

Since this was a huge decision, the system responsibly handed over a spell guidebook to Gu Fei. This guidebook went into detail about Water Affinity and Lightning Affinity and reminded the

Mage how important his or her choice was.

Gu Fei had already decided to choose Water Affinity Initiation. He cared not for the differences between the two affinities, as he only wanted the freezing effect that Water Mages could induce.

Gu Fei casually flipped through the guidebook for a while. Just as he was about to begin his initiation, he heard someone from behind call out to him, “Oh, it’s you. Long time no see!”

Gu Fei turned his head and looked. It was Fleeting Smile. This person’s name had indeed not been online for quite some time. He thought that Fleeting Smile had finished his testing of the game and had thus decided to not play it anymore. Gu Fei felt quite sad to have lost his walking encyclopedia.

Meeting each other after a long time, the first thing Gu Fei did was used his Appraisal skill on Fleeting Smile. The latter was only at level 32. It seemed that he had really stopped playing the game for quite some time, as the equipment he had on was very common. Had Gu Fei not hawked off that pile of trashy gear just then, quite a few items would still have been of use to Fleeting Smile. “Long time no see!” Gu Fei replied.

“I’ve been really busy, so I didn’t have time to play,” Fleeting Smile sighed.

“Any insider info?” Gu Fei casually asked.

“I’m a scrup—”

“Okay, I got it!” Although it had been a while since they had last met, Gu Fei still remembered the line that this guy had always been using.

Fleeting Smile spied the spell guidebook in Gu Fei’s hands and smiled, “Oh, you’re about to do your Job Class Advancement?”

Gu Fei nodded his head.

“Which affinity are you choosing?” Fleeting Smile asked.

“Water Affinity,” Gu Fei answered.

Fleeting Smile furrowed his brows. Based on the data they had collected, around 80% of the Mages that had done their Job Class Advancement chose to be Water Mages.

While this did not affect the game company’s profit, the matter still hurt the game designers’ pride. Since they had painstakingly designed a full system of skills and effects for a Lightning Mage, the majority of Mages’ act of choosing Water Affinity seemed to signify their rejection of the game designers’ other creation.

Fleeting Smile believed that neither of the two Job Class Advancement choices for Mages held any sort of advantage over the other. While the Water Mages’ freezing effect could slow its targets’ speed, the Lightning Mages’ paralyzing effect could prevent its targets from using their skills. Furthermore, the Mages with Lightning Affinity had fast spell-casting time and high Magic Attack Power....

At this point, Fleeting Smile was feeling quite indignant for the Lightning Affinity, so all he thought about was the pros of it. Seeing that Gu Fei was about to join the army of Water Mages, he could not help but say, “Why are you choosing the Water Affinity? Lightning Affinity is equally strong, too!”

Chapter 178 - The Birth of a Lightning Mage

Gu Fei asked wryly, “Is that so?” It’s true that he is an employee of the gaming company, but surely he can’t just magically turn a Lightning Mage into one that has freezing effect, right? Besides that effect, Gu Fei wanted nothing else.

“Why do you wanna choose Water Affinity?” Fleeting Smile asked, wanting to understand the players’ fundamental thought.

“Freezing effect,” Gu Fei replied.

“Hmm, this...” Fleeting Smile was at a loss for words. If that was really the reason, then he could do nothing about it.

This effect was the specialty of Water Affinity, after all. Fleeting Smile would be shooting himself on the foot if he said that Water Affinity’s freezing effect could not compare to Lightning Affinity’s paralyzing effect, as they were the ones who had created the two affinities’ systems.

Right now, he could only emphasize on Lightning Affinity’s positive aspects. Many players had not chosen Lightning Affinity because they had not discovered its advantages.

“A player won’t be able to use skills when under the paralyzing effect. Someone who has no access to his or her skills is as dangerous as a monster that is drawn on paper. You’ve been playing Parallel World longer than I have, so you should understand what I mean. Lightning Affinity has many instant-cast spells, too. If you’re able to use those spells well, you won’t have to allocate many points toward Spirit and can pump them all into Intelligence if you prefer. Adding the Lightning Affinity’s high damage output, the attack you dish out will be very frightening!” Fleeting Smile was alarmed as he finished saying this, as he felt that the reasons he had just given might not sound attracting to Gu Fei, the full-Agility Mage. He has a full-Agility build, so it’s practically useless to tell him how Intelligence or Spirit could

affect his abilities.

What Fleeting Smile did not realize was that something he had said actually moved Gu Fei.

Instant-cast spells!

This was something tempting to Gu Fei. Among his Fire Affinity spells, only Twin Incineration was an instant-cast spell. Gu Fei preferred using it precisely because he could easily mix it into his kung fu. Evidently, that was the advantage of instant-cast spells to him.

Thinking about it more, Gu Fei's Twin Incineration actually already had a high Magic Attack Power to complement his sword style. Was there a need to acquire more instant-cast spells? He merely wanted to use his kung fu, so what was the point of getting all those instant-cast spells if he could not slow his enemies down with the freezing effect of a Water Mage?

As Gu Fei pondered on this, Fleeting Smile continued to promote the wonders of Lightning Affinity. Gu Fei took the chance when Fleeting Smile was taking a breath to ask, "Does Lightning Affinity have the freezing effect?"

Feeling annoyed at having wasted his breath to explain Lightning Affinity's advantages to Gu Fei, Fleeting Smile remarked, "If it is just the freezing effect, plenty of weapons out there have that as an effect. As for the paralyzing effect of Lightning Affinity, it is rarely found in weapons!"

While his argument made sense, it was not applicable to a Mage. In Parallel World, a player needed to directly hit his or her opponent with a weapon to activate its effect. As for a Mage, casting a spell did not require him or her to make contact with the target. Was there even a Mage out there who would use his or her magic stave to whack people directly?

However, this warped logic that was not applicable to most

Mages highly fit Gu Fei's fighting style. He was once more moved by Fleeting Smile's argument, yet doubts quickly surfaced on his mind again, "Why would I need to use a weapon with freezing effect if I have access to the freezing spells as a Water Mage? That would just be me doing something unnecessary!"

Fleeting Smile patiently reasoned, "I'm only worried that you're choosing Water Affinity solely for its freezing effect, resulting in much regret in the future. Lightning Affinity is really awesome, too!"

"I say, isn't it unfair for a scrupulous gaming employee to guide players in their decision-making?" Gu Fei asked. Fleeting Smile obviously wanted to convince Gu Fei toward choosing Lightning Affinity.

"Preposterous!" Fleeting Smile hurriedly refuted, saying, "It's just that so many Mages don't seem to have insight on the advantages that Lightning Affinity provides, which is why I'm elaborating so much here. I just hope that a certain someone would make a sound decision. I just don't want players regretting their decisions later."

"So what are the advantages of Lightning Affinity?"

"Weren't you listening to me all this while?" Fleeting Smile asked, irked.

"Actually, I only need Water Affinity's freezing effect to reduce my opponents' fast speed. That way, I can easily chase after them," Gu Fei explained.

"Easily chase after the enemies?" Fleeting Smile was shocked, "But Lightning Affinity is more suitable for that!"

"Why?"

"Because... Lightning Affinity has the Blink skill!" Fleeting Smile revealed.

"Blink?" Gu Fei was in a daze.

Blink was a skill that the Mage job class would have in most games, except its name varied from game to game. Some MMOs called the skill ‘Psychic Teleportation’ or other similar sounding names, yet its effect remained the same: It allowed the user to move from one place to another at a certain distance instantly.

Gu Fei had little experience playing other MMOs, so he did not know of this. Flipping through his spell guidebook to get a basic idea of the skill, he asked, “What does it do?”

“It allows a Mage to move from one place to another instantly. The skill is part of Lightning Affinity in Parallel World. It’s not indicated in the official skill tree, though,” Fleeting Smile explained.

“Move instantly!” Gu Fei was no longer just feeling moved by Fleeting Smile’s speech. Having fast movement speed was nothing compared to being able to move instantly, after all!

“What level will this skill be available?” Gu Fei asked. He could barely wait to try it out.

“Uhm... It’s quite a late game skill, but it can be learned through skill scrolls,” Fleeting Smile answered.

“Lightning Affinity, it is!” Gu Fei resolved.

“Hmm, that—” Fleeting Smile still wanted to add more, yet Gu Fei already had electricity crackling all over himself. Clearly, he had already begun the process for Lightning Affinity Initiation.

It was too late to regret anything at this point, as the process of advancing a job class could not be stopped by simply pressing the ‘stop’ button.

[Congratulations Player Thousand Miles Drunk for your successful Job Class Advancement to a Lightning Mage! Your magic has already integrated the properties of lightning.] Gu Fei was notified by the system of this after a short while.

At the same time, he had acquired his first spell as a Lightning

Mage....

[Thunderbolt

Effect: Can strike a target with heavenly lightning.

Incantation: Thunderbolt, Strike]

Gu Fei was quite speechless, asking Fleeting Smile, “When you said Lightning Mage’s spells are faster to cast, did you mean that their incantations are shorter?”

The most basic mage spell, Fireball, was the only other incantation with two words. To think that level 40 Lightning Mage spell would also be a two-word incantation. Somehow, the amount of words in an incantation seemed to determine the casting speed of a spell.

In fact, many Mages had practiced hard to ensure that their pronunciation of such incantations would be clear and concise.

“Of course, not! Casting spell is really faster as a Lightning Mage. You’ll understand this once you cast a spell,” Fleeting Smile vehemently denied.

“Okay!” Gu Fei nodded his head in satisfaction. He liked fast. “Anything else that you would like to add about Lightning Affinity?” Gu Fei asked Fleeting Smile. He remembered that Fleeting Smile seemed to be about to say something regarding Lightning Affinity while he was undergoing the initiation for it.

Fleeting Smile’s heart thumped fast when he saw how lively Gu Fei was being. Have I unintentionally done something inappropriate again? I somehow want to establish a cordial relationship with him, yet I have ended up giving him a huge helping hand. Have I actually helped him become more formidable?

Gu Fei who had brought his full set of kung fu skills into Parallel World indeed broke the game’s framework in a way. Despite being a Mage, he was closer to possessing a melee job class.

Blink was originally a spell intended to let a Mage escape pursuit or distance himself or herself from the enemy. With Gu Fei likely acquiring it in the future, some sort of cataclysmic event might result from this foreseeable unholy matrimony.

Fleeting Smile had indeed unintentionally led Gu Fei on to an even brighter future.

“Oh, yeah! I have something I’ve been wanting to ask you,” Gu Fei quipped when he noticed Fleeting Smile remaining quiet for quite a while.

“What is it?” The energy Fleeting Smile had shown when enticing Gu Fei to take Lightning Affinity was now gone and in its place was listlessness.

“Take a look,” Gu Fei took out Moonlit Nightfalls and passed it over to Fleeting Smile.

The muscles on Fleeting Smile’s face twitched. His wish to ban Gu Fei from the game was being strongly tested right now. How could the other players on his same level compete against him when he possesses this weapon that is leagues beyond others?

However, Gu Fei did not know of Fleeting Smile’s current state of mind and merely asked, “This sword is called Moonlit Nightfalls. Can you see its traits?”

“No need. I know about it,” Fleeting Smile replied. Some pieces of the top-grade equipment found in-game were the proud creations of them, and Moonlit Nightfalls was among those. Fleeting Smile knew very well the sword’s traits and value without looking at it.

“This sword has a skill called ‘Impending Nightfall’ that I haven’t been able to meet the conditions for use even now. What exactly are these conditions?” Gu Fei asked.

“You naturally won’t be able to meet the conditions for it, since you’ve not even fulfilled the equipment requirement,” Fleeting

Smile replied.

“Is that so?” Gu Fei felt a little disappointed. He would have tried finding a way around this restriction if there had been a workable method. In the end, it was because he failed to meet the equipment requirement to utilize the sword’s full potential.

Reaching Moonlit Nightfalls’ Sword Aptitude and Spell Aptitude requirements was necessary to unlocking the sword’s full potential. Gu Fei had been depending on his Midnight Spirit Robe to somehow meet the Spell Aptitude requirement, yet his Sword Aptitude still had a long way to go.

According to the current players’ experimentations, adding points toward Strength could increase one’s Sword Aptitude. Gu Fei’s Agility had yet to reach a level he was contented with, so he did not plan to allocate his points toward Strength at present. Besides, he was only curious of Moonlit Nightfalls’ skill and was not in a rush to acquire it. When it came to a PvP, Gu Fei still mainly relied on his kung fu skills.

In fact, Gu Fei found insta-killing a whole swath of enemies with Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno as insipid despite others deeming it as something amazing and OP. Thus, Gu Fei had nothing else to add once he heard Fleeting Smile’s reply.

This ensuing silence instantly made Fleeting Smile feel depressed. He had just decided to no longer help Gu Fei out, so he had been planning to coldly reply at him if he asked for information about Aptitude. Who would have guessed that Gu Fei would not bother to pry any further or ask another question.

Just as Fleeting Smile was about to say something, Gu Fei waved his hand to him and said, “Carry on with what you need to do, then. I’m logging off.” In a flash of white light, Gu Fei had disappeared.

“AHHH!” Fleeting Smile felt so dismayed by Gu Fei’s anticlimatic response that he really wanted to give himself a good stab

with a knife.

Chapter 179 - Foe-herder's Offensive Maneuvers

Matters related to Gu Fei continued to happen in-game as he went offline.

Even after Brave Surge was sent to prison by Gu Fei, he did not change his mind about recruiting the latter. Since imprisonment in Parallel World meant total isolation, he was temporarily unable to contact any of his people. Fortunately, Brave Surge was quick-witted enough to go offline. In reality, he was able to contact his buddies that had witnessed his PvP with Gu Fei.

Brave Surge felt gratified when he learned that his companions had asked for Gu Fei's IGN. He then instructed them to wait for his release from prison before telling their other comrades of this information.

His PvP with Gu Fei only reinforced his desire to recruit the latter and began to think of ways to entice Gu Fei into his guild while serving time in prison.

Meanwhile, Foe-herder, the guild leader of Cloud Herder, remained oblivious to the fact that he had just missed out on meeting Gu Fei by clearing off all his PK points. He only went online in the late afternoon after he had fully rested in reality. At this time of the day, the scenery in-game was vastly different from when it was the wee hours in the morning or the dead of night.

When Foe-herder got online, he promptly received a message from his female spies: All their applications to join Amethyst Rebirth had been rejected. Apparently, people could only join Amethyst Rebirth with the referral of someone already in the guild and any players randomly asking to join it would be rejected.

Foe-herder felt stunned. Among the many criteria that the different guilds had set up before they would accept someone as

their own, Amethyst Rebirth's criterion was actually the most difficult. This sort of guild would never be huge and would not have any big goals, but its members would always have excellent relationship with one another. Infiltrating such a guild was possible, but it would take time. After all, one would need to befriend and gain the trust of certain members of Amethyst Rebirth before having the chance to join the guild. He was unsure of how long that would take, so Foe-herder decisively canceled the plan to infiltrate Amethyst Rebirth and prepared to use the currency ploy he had prepared instead.

Opening up his friends list, he saw that Brave Surge was currently offline. I wonder how things are on his end, Foe-herder thought to himself. He tried sending him a message, yet he only got this notification from the system: [Player Brave Surge is not in a serviceable area.]

From experience, Foe-herder immediately deduced what this message meant and his heart was filled with elation. Brave Surge must have been sent to prison! It seemed that he had luckily obtained a head start in their headhunting war.

As such, Foe-herder became calmer and grew more confident in assigning the online members a task each relating to the matter at hand. He then confidently headed toward one of the city gates.

It was at this moment that his system notification sounded for a new mail: "Have you managed to acquire more information regarding that particular someone? Feel free to send me a message any time if you need anything."

Foe-herder saw that this short message was sent not too long after he had logged off. The sender's name was Xi Xiaotian. There was even an emoticon beaming brightly at him right next to the sender's name.

"It's her..." Looking at the emoticon, he immediately recalled the beautiful lady who had offered to provide him and Brave Surge

information about the OP Mage for the price of 1000 gold coins. He laughed coldly and casually deleted the message. “1000 gold coins? Why don’t you steal that amount of money, instead?! I doubt that I won’t be able to tempt any of the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies into opening their mouths at a lower price,” Foe-herder was confident in the currency ploy he had in motion.

Shortly afterward, members of Cloud Herder Guild could be seen all over Yunduan City. While they did not know Gu Fei’s appearance, they were still familiar with the appearances of a few ladies of Amethyst Rebirth. It was an all-female guild after all, so most people would of course pay attention to those who belonged to that guild, not to mention that Cloud Herder had just clashed with Amethyst Rebirth during the guild versus guild tournament yesterday. The Cloud Herder’s players only failed to find any of the ladies last night because they went offline after the match. Now that daytime had arrived, it did not take long for Foe-herder to receive a few reports of the locations of several Amethyst Rebirth ladies.

“Just keep an eye on the ladies. I’ll interact with each of them personally,” Foe-herder commanded.

The closest targets were currently on their way toward Foe-herder’s location at the city’s east gate, so he hurriedly adjusted his armor and struck a dashing pose. In no time at all, four ladies of Amethyst Rebirth entered his line of sight. A Thief on Stealth of Cloud Herder was following the ladies not too far behind. Naturally, Foe-herder could not see this Thief and only received a message from him: “The four ladies have arrived.”

Foe-herder waited until the four ladies were closer to him before clearing his throat, “Ladies.”

The four ladies halted their footsteps as they turned their heads to his direction.

Foe-herder amiably smiled at them, “I’d like to find out

something from you.”

“What is it?” the ladies genially asked.

“Are you members of Amethyst Rebirth?”

The four ladies nodded their heads.

“Does your guild have a male player?” he asked while feigning ignorance.

The four ladies nodded their heads once more.

“What is his name?” Foe-herder tried his best to pretend that his question was random. Last night’s plan was to directly ask the Amethyst Rebirth’s ladies first and for the currency ploy to only be enacted next if directly questioning the ladies proved to be futile.

The four ladies immediately became alert, “Who are you?” Their alertness was something that they had cultivated over time due to the male players approaching them to ask for their fellow female guildmates’ names. None of the ladies wanted to be pestered by random individuals, so they would never give their fellow guildmates’ names to suspicious players. Despite Gu Fei being a male player, the ladies already had the habit of probing for the asker’s intention first before giving out anything.

“I’m Foe-herder,” Foe-herder replied.

Just the name of the Warrior ranked sixth on the leaderboard would garner quite the attention of players even in other in-game cities, yet the four ladies who were from the same city as him merely looked at one another in confusion, “Who is he?”

“I’m the guild leader of Cloud Herder. We fought with you girls yesterday,” Foe-herder informed them, feeling depressed. Not recognizing him at a glance was fine, yet for the ladies to actually not even know his name, was he that unremarkable of a player?

“Oh! You’re from that silly guild with five hundred men that only sent out fifty men for the guild versus guild tournament,

right?” one of the ladies asked.

“Hey! Don’t say such things!” another lady admonished her as she surreptitiously glanced at Foe-herder.

He felt so embarrassed, but since it was the truth, he could not retort back. As for the move being silly... Since Cloud Herder lost the match, what else could it be?

Foe-herder coughed and tried to change the subject, “I wanna ask the name of your guild’s male Mage.”

“Ah! I remember you,” another lady suddenly cried out, adding, “You asked us the same question after we finished our fight yesterday.”

Foe-herder nodded his head, “Yes!”

“Sis Xiaowu said to not tell you of our male player’s name. Scram! We’re leaving!” The four ladies then hurried off.

“Ah...” Foe-herder’s hand was already reaching into his dimensional pocket for his money pouch to begin his currency ploy, but he ended up staying quiet as he released his hold of the coin purse.

Foe-herder refrained from using that ploy, as he realized that there were four ladies present. If he were to tempt them with money, he would have to satisfy all four. The four together would turn the 100 gold coins into 25 gold coins each. If one of them asked for 100 gold coins, he would likely have to pay each of them that much.

Why be hung up on this one group? With that thought in mind, Foe-herder asked for the location of the next target.

“One lady is here at Peddlers’ Street 3. She has a stall set up!” someone reported to Foe-herder.

Quickly making his way over to Peddlers’ Street 3, Foe-herder was then approached by his guild member stationed there and was

directed to where the stall was.

Foe-herder gave the lady a once over. She was a Fighter. Her hands were hugging her knees as she squatted on the ground. The stall before her had many useless items, yet she eagerly awaited the customers to arrive.

“Seems like someone who is in need of money,” Foe-herder smilingly said as he confidently walked toward the direction of her stall and was about to carry out his ploy.

...A few minutes later, a commotion suddenly brewed in Peddlers’ Street 3 and Foe-herder could be seen squeezing his way out of the crowd with his hands covering the back of his head for protection. Several items sailed through the air and bounced off of his armor, as the female Fighter waved her fists and loudly cursed him, “Trying to poach our guild member?! You even dare to bribe me with gold coins! You better run, you scoundrel!”

Foe-herder fled from Peddlers’ Street 3 with a flustered look on his face. The Cloud Herder’s member that was responsible for tailing this target also ran out, fixing Foe-herder a confused gaze, “Guild Leader, why did you flee from her?”

“Many people are nearby, so doing this sort of thing here is difficult!” Foe-herder replied as he sweated. The lady got angry once he revealed his intention to bribe her. Getting shouted at in one of the busiest streets in Yunduan City for trying to bribe a lady, he could not help but feel immense shame and anger.

“Peddlers’ Streets and taverns; let’s avoid those places with many eyewitnesses,” Foe-herder announced on the guild channel after this incident.

“There ain’t many people here!” someone immediately suggested a target in one of the less traveled by streets of Yunduan City. Foe-herder rushed over there while asking, “What is she doing there?”

“Seems like she’s repeating a quest,” the member reported.

“What quest is there in that place?” Foe-herder asked, perplexed.

“I don't know,” The member was equally clueless on this front. “Could it be a hidden quest? She has been repeating this quest here for quite some time now.”

“Is that so?!” Foe-herder excitedly hurried over to the said street.

Two guild members showed their heads from the corner of a wall upon his arrival and pointed toward a certain direction: “We’ve been counting and she’ll be in that spot once every seven minutes. It’s been six minutes since she last showed herself, so she should be here soon.” Just as they said this, a lady appeared at the opposite end of the street and noisily made her way toward the location that the two men had just indicated.

“I’m going,” Seeing that the lady was a fellow Warrior, Foe-herder immediately felt a sense of closeness toward her. He arranged his armor presentably and noisily made his way toward the location as well.

Chapter 180 - The Wheat within the Mud

Foe-herder steadily walked forward as his head became filled with covetous thoughts.

The covetous thoughts were not about the lady but the quest that she was doing. Is there really a quest here? Foe-herder had not heard anything about this before. We are both Warriors, so this quest might be beneficial to me as well, he continued to ponder on inside. Foe-herder felt that he should try to find out more about the quest here first. While successfully poaching Gu Fei would bolster his guild, successfully obtaining an important quest would bolster himself.

The choices were either to let his guild bask in potential glory or to let himself enjoy the limelight. Foe-herder did not even hesitate to choose the latter. “Ahem!” he coughed to get the lady’s attention when he got near her, “Babe, what are you doing here?”

“Quest,” the lady replied. With people being bolder inside a game, male players striking up a conversation with female players was actually a common occurrence, so most ladies were already used to such a situation.

“Oh. What quest is this?” Foe-herder continued to ask nonchalantly.

“It’s called ‘The Wheat within the Mud’,” the lady honestly replied.

Every quest had a unique name, and Foe-herder had never heard of such a quest before this lady mentioned it to him. Although the quest’s name sounded very plain, determining a quest’s quality by its name alone would be very foolish. It was like judging a book solely by its cover.

Foe-herder excitedly and carefully asked, “How did you obtain it?”

“Just talk to the NPC here,” the lady answered as she began to knock on the door before her.

A hunchbacked old man, with eyes reflecting his years of accumulated experience, opened the door. The sight of the elderly man caused Foe-herder to feel emotional. Old men would often leave behind a valuable inheritance. The game designers seemed to agree with this train of thought as they would often create mysterious old men that would hand out certain secret quests. With the old man being hidden in such a secluded part of the city, it gave off the vibe that this was a hidden quest that would only get triggered when the players coincidentally knocked on his door.

“Young one, do me a favor. I’ve scattered some wheat over by the marketplace. Can you please help me find it? Remember, you must find the wheat within five minutes; otherwise, it will be taken by someone else,” was what the old man said as he handed the quest to the lady Warrior.

The lady swiftly left after this. Foe-herder wanted to approach the old man next, yet the old codger completely ignored him and merely closed the door.

Foe-herder hurriedly knocked on that door, worried that the quest would no longer be available since the lady had already gotten a hold of it.

The door opened and the old man appeared once more, gazing at Foe-herder and repeating his instruction to the lady before. Foe-herder promptly agreed to his request and the quest ‘Wheat within the Mud’ appeared on his quest log.

Nothing out of the ordinary could be gleaned from the quest description, which made Foe-herder quite suspicious of it as he headed to the marketplace.

The marketplace that the NPC was talking about was not one of the Peddlers’ Streets that the players had established. Rather, it was the system-created marketplace where the NPC and player

merchants gathered to sell products that the system had provided. The street was not as crowded or as boisterous as Peddlers' Streets, but quite a lot of players were still passing through it. Foe-herder searched the entire marketplace, yet he still came up with nothing. Could it be that the lady has already picked up all the wheat, which resulted into me being unable to find any? Foe-herder saw the lady leave just as he arrived at the marketplace.

Very soon, Foe-herder's five-minute deadline was up. A system prompt rang out and the quest was tagged as 'failure'.

"This quest isn't easy!" Foe-herder was visibly moved by this. At this moment in time, he saw the lady appear in the marketplace once more.

When she caught sight of Foe-herder, she smiled, "Did you grab the quest, too?"

Foe-herder nodded his head.

"Did you manage to find the wheat, then?"

Foe-herder shook his head.

"He he!" A strange smile appeared on the lady's face as she unhurriedly told him, "Gotta use your head a bit more!"

Foe-herder tried to carefully decipher what the lady meant, yet he was still at a loss.

A minute later, the lady asked him, "Have you gotten it?"

Foe-herder shook his head to demonstrate his cluelessness.

"He he he! What's the name of the quest?" the lady asked.

"'Wheat within the Mud'," Foe-herder answered.

"Correct!" The lady congratulated him, yet Foe-herder could still not make sense of it.

"That means that the wheat can be found inside the mud!" the lady explained in a voice that sounded as if she was saying

something very obvious.

“Eh?!” Foe-herder exclaimed, stunned.

“Take a look!” the lady said as she walked to a corner where a ragged piece of cloth could be seen on top of a pile of mud. Exerting force on it, she pulled out the small bag from within. “This is the wheat from within the mud! Good luck!” The lady happily exclaimed to Foe-herder before leaving once more.

Foe-herder was dumbfounded. He realized that he had made a simple problem complex by overthinking things. This was basically a beginner quest that required players to ‘find an item’. This sort of quests that had items hidden in random places was often criticized by the players. And yet, the lady kept on repeating this quest. What would be the point in doing so if it truly was just a simple quest?

Foe-herder believed that there must be something to this, so he once more went to the old codger to retry the quest.

He might know how to achieve the goal now, but finding a ragged piece of cloth that indicated the presence of the wheat was not easy, causing him to fail the quest once more. Before long, Foe-herder had repeated the quest seven times. Rummaging through every inch of the mud in the whole marketplace, he finally managed to accomplish the quest in the allocated five minutes.

Foe-herder excitedly bellowed as he rushed back to where he had gotten the quest and handed the small bag of wheat to the old man.

“Thank you, young man! Your help has been invaluable!” the old man said as he handed the quest reward over. Foe-herder took it and gave it a look: 10 silver coins.

“What the...” Foe-herder mumbled to himself. He did all that just for this measly reward? Foe-herder felt indignant. If it was just this pittance, why would the lady do the quest repeatedly? Foe-herder looked around and realized that the lady was no longer around, so

he quickly messaged the members in charge of tailing her. The members were even more at a loss as they asked, “Boss, didn’t you already make contact with her?”

“Uhm... That...” Foe-herder found it really awkward to admit that he had placed his personal interest above the guild’s future.

They had actually lost sight of the target on their third attempt. At the same time, Foe-herder remained deeply skeptical about what had happened. “It’s such a simple quest, why did she have to repeat it so many times?”

This question floated in Foe-herder’s mind. Sadly, the two members had not kept watch over the situation; otherwise, they would have enlightened him: “Guild Leader, you have repeated the same quest seven times as well....”

However, the real task at hand still had to be done. Someone reported seeing a lady of Amethyst Rebirth window shopping over by the Trade Exchange by herself. Foe-herder immediately headed over once he got this news. He stepped into the Trade Exchange platform for about five seconds before leaving. As the two members guarding the entrance felt perplexed, Foe-herder angrily chided, “Trying to bribe Svelte Dancer? Are you two brainless dolts?!”

Failure... Foe-herder’s monetary assault had been met with failure in the end, and it was an absolutely overwhelming defeat, too.

Foe-herder recalled what a certain lady had spat out at him: “Hmph! Getting someone’s name from us isn’t a big deal, but for you to actually attempt bribing us, what sort of people do you take us for?!”

Foe-herder was devastated! Had he found the lady from the start, he would not have to spend a cent to get the Mage’s name. Now that it had gotten to this point, he had ended up pissing off every Amethyst Rebirth’s lady to the point that they refused to reveal the

OP Mage's IGN. Foe-herder and his guild were now viewed with utmost contempt by the ladies. Moreover, he was unaware of something that would figuratively leave him in tears.

Gu Fei had also logged into the game that afternoon. Seeing the many little posters all over the city looking for him and feeling sympathetic at the colossal effort that those people had expended to find him, Gu Fei decided to get in touch with them. But due to Foe-herder's deplorable actions, the ladies indirectly convinced Gu Fei to do otherwise.

"Hmph! Did he think he can do whatever he wants by just offering money as compensation?" was spat out by the number one pay-to-win player Svelte Dancer, which made the statement more impactful despite its irony. If even she thought of it this way, this meant that Foe-herder was indeed a dastardly individual.

"Money is not everything!" all the ladies cried out in unison, as they began to digress from the topic at hand.

"Just what are you all talking about?!" Gu Fei, who had been dragged into the discussion after getting online, perplexedly asked.

As the de facto spokesperson of the guild, July explained the general situation to him. "Quite a lot of guilds out there are trying to recruit you. Do give us a heads-up if you plan to leave the guild." She would always pick up this professional tone whenever she spoke for the guild. Although July approved of Gu Fei's presence in Amethyst Rebirth and did not wish to see him leave, she nevertheless showed an attitude that respected his wishes.

A guild where every member was happy was July's biggest aspiration. If someone felt happier elsewhere, July would not stop him or her from leaving. She had previously asked Gu Fei to stay in the guild for a while since his departure would have disbanded the guild. Unknowingly, Amethyst Rebirth had gained a lot from his existence in it, especially in that incident with No Smile.

I do hope that he would not leave... was July's thought deep

down.

Chapter 181 - The Woeful Experts

July's thinking was too idealistic, as it was impossible for any group to keep everyone in it satisfied. Her way of thinking that wished to respect everyone's wishes was quite a western concept. What China promoted was collectivism, so the minority in the country usually submitted to the will and ideologies of the majority.

On the guild channel, besides July who had not voiced her opinion, all the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies were currently expressing their wish for Gu Fei to stay.

This was precisely what made Gu Fei confused. Amid the ladies' chattering, Gu Fei feebly asked, "But when did I say that I'm leaving the guild?"

The whole channel instantly became quiet. The wilder the thoughts were, the further the digression became. Foe-herder wanted to use gold coins to loosen the ladies' mouths, but it was simply to learn of Gu Fei's IGN. This matter... It absolutely did not involve Gu Fei leaving the guild.

"Oh..." The ladies immediately stopped discussing the matter upon realizing this and carried on with their chit-chats. Only a few ladies continued to message Gu Fei in private.

"Beware of being led astray when you're keeping bad company," Luo Luo advised Gu Fei.

"Large guilds love to bully small guilds, so you better not join any of them!" was Will-low's two cents regarding this matter. She had previously been oppressed by a powerful guild, after all.

"Large guilds are super annoying. It's so pointless," Svelte Dancer said to Gu Fei based on her similar experiences with his. Evidently, joining any large guilds she wished to was easy given her indomitable strength.

“That Foe-herder is so silly. He doesn’t even know to look for the ‘Wheat within the Mud’ when it already says so,” June’s Rain remarked.

Gu Fei felt somewhat sorry for Foe-herder’s quest debacle earlier. It was similar to taking an important exam, only to realize that the only question printed on the paper was ‘ $1+1=?$ ’

Most people would definitely assume that it was a trick question, and would be having second thoughts on writing down ‘2’ as the answer. Perhaps, ‘ $1+1$ ’ had other answers as well. But if June’s Rain was the one posing the question, the answer would definitely be ‘2’.

Foe-herder must have overthought things, which turned him into a laughingstock to June’s Rain. How pitiful! Gu Fei thought to himself as he headed to Ray’s Bar.

The ladies no longer had to participate in the mercenary PvP tournament since they were eliminated last night, but Gu Fei still had to join Young Master’s Elite for today’s match. Seeing that it was about time for the match, he headed to Ray’s Bar to meet up with his fellow mercenaries.

“I’ve advanced to a Lightning Mage!” Gu Fei immediately informed them this once he saw that the five were already inside the room.

“Ah?” The five eyed him in confusion.

“Thunderbolt! Strike!” Gu Fei waved his hand and a bolt of lightning descended from the ceiling. It then struck the table and a burned smell subsequently filled the air.

“Stop messing around!” Brother Assist grimly admonished as that lightning bolt had struck somewhere near him. Given Gu Fei’s high Magic Attack Power and the cramped space of the room, that bolt would have struck Brother Assist dead had Gu Fei slightly shifted his hand to his direction.

“Don’t worry. I’m not even holding my weapon,” Gu Fei said as he sat down.

“Why did you suddenly choose Lightning Affinity?” Brother Assist asked.

“I learned that Lightning Affinity has the Blink skill that can let me move from one place to another instantly. That’s something useful to me,” Gu Fei explained.

All the present experts inhaled sharply, as they knew very well what would happen if Gu Fei came to possess the Blink skill.

“Blink! How could I have forgotten?! Mages can learn Blink!” Royal God Call muttered to himself.

Gu Fei’s fighting prowess had shocked these online gaming experts time and time again. Although all of them had become friends now, the others had unknowingly been imagining Gu Fei as an opponent that they were thinking of ways to deal with.

Royal God Call, for his part, was thinking that he could now contend with Gu Fei after acquiring Svelte Dancer’s Boots of the Nimble Cloud, which gave him a faster movement speed than Gu Fei’s. Unknowingly, Royal God Call was already considering ways to deal with Gu Fei and was even thinking of kiting Gu Fei to prevent the latter from closing in on him.

While the other Mages were worrying about players engaging them in close combat, these experts were worrying about this Mage before them getting anywhere near them in combat.

Gu Fei’s unintentional reversal of a Mage’s combat method had literally flipped the usage of his job class’s many spells and skills. An example was Twin Incineration; this spell was insignificant in the hands of other Mages, yet it was a deadly spell in the hands of Gu Fei. He was even intending to use the defensive skill, Blink, as an offensive skill.

To think that a Mage can be played like this! All these experts felt

amazed by this enlightenment.

“I also learned that Blink will only be available for Mages at the later part of the game, so I want to get a skill scroll for it. Hopefully, I’ll get that in today’s match,” Gu Fei made a grabbing motion with his hand.

Brother Assist shook his head repeatedly, “Do you think that the system is kind enough to provide you with that when you need it? How can anyone be that lucky?”

“So how would I get it, then?” Gu Fei asked.

“You buy it, of course!” Brother Assist replied matter-of-factly, saying, “Go to the forums and leave a post. Buying the permanent skill scroll for Blink is more realistic than you depending on luck to obtain it.”

“Won’t... Won’t that be very expensive?” Gu Fei asked apprehensively. He had already experienced earlier today how hard it was to have insufficient money.

“Mmm. The price of a skill scroll depends on how useful the skill is. The problem is that most players don’t know what the skills on the skill scrolls do, so determining their exact prices was difficult. If you trade for a skill scroll, the player will be basing its price on its known general usage in other MMOs,” Brother Assist explained.

“What is the known general usage for Blink, then? Isn’t it available in most games?” Gu Fei asked.

“Blink usually allows a player to move instantly from one place to another, yet its cool-down time is slightly long. Relying on it fully to keep up with an opponent is impossible, and it’s usually used as a lifesaving skill or to move from a place within sight that you can’t reach. Based on these, its price should be average! Having it is good, but not having it won’t be a loss, either,” Brother Assist answered.

“That’s because you don’t know how to use it,” Royal God Call

interjected.

Brother Assist was expressionless, “When determining the value of an item, we need to depend on what most people understand of the item, and not the evaluation that the few experts have. If we use your knowledge to price it, Gu Fei will have to buy Blink Scroll for an exorbitant price.”

“That’s right. Don’t interject when you know nothing, kid,” Gu Fei said to Royal God Call.

“Oi, you’re now a Lightning Mage. Do you still not want my skill scroll for it?” Royal God Call intended to use that dangling carrot to make Gu Fei submit this once.

Unexpectedly, Gu Fei replied with, “Why would I want that trashy skill of yours?”

Royal God Call had never seen Electric Wall before, but he could tell from the skill description that it was similar to the Wall of Flame spell in other MMOs. It was a useful spell whose value would be higher than Blink. Gu Fei’s display of his poor knowledge of mage skills and spells made Royal God Call want to throw up blood. “You’re not a real Mage!” he angrily said.

No one bothered with him as Brother Assist merely continued speaking, “Actually, the problem isn’t the price for that skill scroll; it’s whether the skill is available on the market or not. But since everyone is participating in Parallel World’s event, some lucky player will surely get it. Any skill scroll can be given by the system to a PvP winner regardless of the person’s job class, so it should be possible to find an unlucky player like Royal—”

“You’re the unlucky one!” Royal God Call indignantly interrupted him.

Gu Fei pulled out his sword and placed it on the table, the tip of it pointing directly at Royal God Call. He then said to Brother Assist, “Brother Assist, please continue.”

Brother Assist smiled, “So you should quickly go to the forums and post your purchase request!”

“But I don’t have any money now... No matter how cheap it can be, it will still cost above 1000 gold coins, right?” Gu Fei asked.

Brother Assist nodded his head.

“Let’s pool our money together!” Sword Demon proposed, “I have somewhere over 200 gold coins.”

“I also have 200 gold coins, but I gotta leave some for alcohol,” Young Master Han said.

“I have about 300 gold coins here,” Brother Assist said.

“F*ck! You’re all rich. I only have about 50 gold coins with me,” War Without Wounds felt depressed upon learning how much money everyone had at the moment.

“Ha ha ha ha! All of you are paupers! I have—eh?! Why do I only have 400 gold coins?!” Royal God Call, who was originally laughing maniacally, was now in tears. He had earned a large sum from his transaction with Svelte Dancer, yet he had somehow spent almost all the money without noticing it. Indeed, people who did not work hard for their money would not put much value to it and would most likely spend it haphazardly.

“He he! Seems like we’re all a bit tight on cash at the moment,” Young Master Han remarked. The online experts were usually not the poor sort, especially famous top experts like them. The average gamers would actually find their hundreds of gold coins rather lavish, but in the minds of these experts, Parallel World had actually left them in quite a woeful state. Unlike their past games where they had remained glorious in every aspect, they were aware that Parallel World had someone like Gu Fei, whose capabilities was an unclimbable mountain to them. And when it came to financial matters, they were not doing that great either to qualify as ‘experts’ who could spend money like water without

worrying too much.

When the rest heard Young Master Han's remark, they stared at him disdainfully.

"Once we win this mercenary PvP tournament, our group will become very famous! Is there really a need to worry about money?" Young Master Han asked.

"Let's not talk about the future," Brother Assist said, "Together, we have about 1100 gold coins. I reckon that sum isn't enough. Permanent skill scrolls are something new, so they will surely be pretty pricey. It's also possible for you to not be the only one trying to buy it. If there's a high demand but low supply and the price rises accordingly, it may not be impossible for you to get the skill scroll at around 3000 to 5000 gold coins."

Gu Fei felt vexed. He had just experienced being poor, so why was he going through it once more? What was worse was the fact that the amount he needed this time was much higher. Even if he managed to sell all the useless trinkets he had amassed, they would not be enough to earn him that much money.

"Miles, quickly bag Svelte Dancer. I feel—" Royal God Call promptly shut his trap upon seeing that Gu Fei's sword had actually moved an inch toward his direction.

"Offer yourself to others! People are distributing posters and flyers all over just to look for you, so they must be very willing to spend a large sum for you!" War Without Wounds suggested.

"They didn't actually offer that much. The reward is only 20 gold coins," Brother Assist commented. As everyone stared at him, he explained, "Uhm... What are you guys thinking about? I was merely passing by. Just passing by...."

"Which rendezvous point did you go to? It's 30 gold coins when I asked how much do they offer for the reward!" War Without Wounds said.

“I have also heard that it’s 30 gold coins!” Royal God Call agreed with War Without Wounds.

Gu Fei was speechless. It seemed that Luo Luo’s worry was not unfounded, after all. He had truly found himself among some bad company.

Chapter 182 - A Bunch of Bad Friends

Seeing the ugly expression on Gu Fei's face, the three men hurriedly said, "Don't misunderstand. We were just inquiring out of curiosity and don't plan to betray you."

"Actually, it's no big deal even if we do," Brother Assist said before asking, "Miles, you have set your gaming account into one that only accepts the friend requests that you approve of, right?"

"You sold him out?" Royal God Call and War Without Wounds asked Brother Assist.

"Of course, not!" Brother Assist denied, saying, "It is just 20 gold coins...."

"That's what they offered if someone manages to provide Miles' name to them. But if we could arrange for them to meet him in person, they would probably offer a larger sum, right?" War Without Wounds asked.

"Definitely!" Royal God Call nodded his head incessantly.

Everyone gazed at Gu Fei eagerly, as if they had just found a really top-grade item.

"Let's do a 3-7 split! You can take 70% while the three of us can take 30% together," Royal God Call suggested.

Gu Fei's face turned cold.

"They've expended so much effort looking for you, so you ought to give them a chance at least!" War Without Wounds cajoled.

Gu Fei did not really take it to heart, but he still found it somewhat strange that he was now an 'offering' to a business deal. Not to mention that this bunch of bad friends were eagerly trying to push him to the market... It was truly a hard to swallow experience.

"Stop messing around!" Young Master Han finally said.

Oh. To think that this guy actually has some decency! Gu Fei did not know how to answer Royal God Call, War Without Wounds, and Brother Assist's proposition, yet Young Master Han actually stepped in to help him out, which left Gu Fei feeling gratified.

Young Master Han unhurriedly waxed, "Only two guilds have their eyes on Miles right now. We should wait till the later stages of this PvP tournament, when there are more eyes on him and his guild; that would give us far more leverage to obtain a higher price!"

Gu Fei was speechless at misjudgment of Young Master Han's character.

"That makes sense!" War Without Wounds enthusiastically slapped the table.

"Miles, you gotta do well in the upcoming PvPs!" Royal God Call looked forward to his performance earnestly.

"What do you think is the appropriate amount for us to charge for a face-to-face session?" Brother Assist began to practically breakdown this operation.

"Oi!" Gu Fei felt that these people were treating him no better than a corpse.

"A name is worth 20 or 30 gold coins, so maybe a face-to-face meeting is about 50 or 60 gold coins?"

"50 or 60? We have to charge them at least 100! We shouldn't give them a discount here! You've done research on the mentality of these guild leaders. In their hearts, a person like Miles is extremely precious. To willingly put forth 20 or 30 gold coins for just his name, it shows just how desperate they are to get close to him."

"You're right! Meeting Miles once, there's no way that they can convince him to join, right? As long as they don't add one another to their friends list, they will only be able to get to Miles through

us, allowing us to charge them more. So if Miles actually rejects them for ten or eight times, won't we all make it rich?"

"That's too optimistic! At this rate, they will be able to tell that we are blatantly using this method to pry them off their gold coins."

"That's right. We will arrange a meeting between them and Miles and make Miles pretend that he has no knowledge about it. That way, we can prevent our customers from having their guards up!"

"Oh, yes. We will look dirty if they know that we are using such a method to earn their gold coins."

"So you guys know how dirty this whole thing is? I'm definitely against this!" Gu Fei yelled.

These men wore an awkward expression on their faces. Silence permeated the room for a while before Brother Assist laughingly said, "Ha ha ha! We were only kidding. Don't take it to heart!"

Gu Fei solemnly gazed at them. War Without Wounds and Royal God Call smilingly said as well, "It's a joke! A joke!"

"Is there anything else that we need to go through together? If there's none, I'll be taking my leave first," Gu Fei looked at Young Master Han. Usually, he would give them a rundown of their next opponents.

"Nope!" Young Master Han answered. Today's enemy is weak, so there's no need to brief them about it.

Gu Fei bade his fellow mercenaries farewell and exited the room.

The room descended into silence once more. Royal God Call raised the curtain and peered outside.

"Is he gone?" War Without Wounds asked after a beat.

"He's gone!" Royal God Call nodded his head.

"Alright, everyone! We don't really need to tell Miles about this," Brother Assist began. "Let's invite those bigwigs, like Foe-herder

and Brave Surge, for a meeting and then proceed to call Miles over. That solves the matter entirely! Not many guilds out there know of Gu Fei's prowess, and we can actually disseminate this information to those who are not in the know! Since many wanted flyers and posters for Miles are circulating in the city, I reckon many people out there have become curious of his identity. Brave Surge of Carouse is hoping that the others wouldn't find out that the wanted posters is actually a disguise for an attempt to poach Miles to their side, but I am sure they couldn't hide that fact for long. Just look at us, didn't we all learn about it ourselves?" Brother Assist continued.

"You guys wouldn't even know of this if I haven't told you," Young Master Han snorted.

"Of course you would spread the news, and so would others if they grab hold of such a juicy scandal. Don't forget that there are still people from those two guilds who are busily inquiring all over the city about Miles' IGN, so when this goes on for a while any observant individuals would be able to tell that the posters and flyers were distributed under the orders of those two guilds. Sooner or later, people are going to realize that this wanted Mage is someone who is more than what meets the eyes. What I am saying is... We only need to get the word out to increase this spread of information. In fact, we don't need to depend on Miles to win every stage of the PvP event for him to garner the attention of others. There's no telling too if today is the day that Amethyst Rebirth gets eliminated from the PvP tournament despite having him," Brother Assist explained.

"Man, Brother Assist. You're a lot dirtier than I imagined!" Royal God Call sighed in admiration.

"I'll go stir up the hype on the forums today by using my ten or so different forum accounts. I guarantee that everyone will know of Carouse and Cloud Herder's intention by tomorrow," Brother Assist said, adding, "Guilds like Traversing Four Seas might be

compelled to join in on the search by then. It's hard to tell if Traversing Four Seas or Carouse is stronger precisely because neither has a player like Miles. Whoever gets a hold of Miles first will more or less win the title of the number one guild in Yunduan City. I believe any level 4 guild and higher will be moved into action by this news," Brother Assist continued speaking.

"We're gonna be rich!" War Without Wounds became very excited.

"But... How are we going to explain things to Miles?! I feel that he's not going to be happy about this," Royal God Call cautioned.

"That... Let's just treat it like we're making a joke at his expense! Miles isn't that petty of a man, anyway!"

"Given his personality, it's unlikely that he'll want the money we make out of this," Royal God Call added.

Brother Assist smiled faintly and did not say another word.

Royal God Call finally realized that this was all part of his plan, "Brother Assist, you're too despicable and shameless."

"Are you saying you want no part in this?" Brother Assist asked nonchalantly.

"Of course, I want in!" Royal God Call hurriedly shouted.

"What about you guys?" Brother Assist looked at the rest of the group.

"I'm not participating in this!" Sword Demon lightly replied as he stood up, adjusting his cape before leaving.

Brother Assist was not surprised by this and merely gazed over to War Without Wounds and Young Master Han next.

War Without Wounds nodded his head slightly, while Young Master Han shrugged his shoulders, signifying that he had no particular qualms about the plan. With that, each of them continued drinking at their pace.

“Would Sword Demon inform Miles?” Royal God Call asked, worried.

“No, he’s not that sort of guy,” Brother Assist replied.

“You’ve got a pretty good read of his character!” Young Master Han arched his eyebrows.

“He he!” was Brother Assist’s only response.

“We have to move fast! What if someone else steals the initiative from us?” Royal God Call asked.

“That will depend on Amethyst Rebirth. Besides them, Miles doesn’t have many friends. Aren’t you two quite familiar with the ladies over there? Why don’t you try and find out what’s their take on the matter!” Brother Assist said to Royal God Call and War Without Wounds.

“True!” The two men quickly stood up and left. A private message from them would suffice to find out about this matter, yet these two would naturally not give up a chance to meet up with the ladies.

Only when the two left did Young Master Han faintly say, “Amethyst Rebirth will not be a hindrance to that money-making plan of yours. If they had any intention of revealing Miles’ identity, those two large guilds would already be aware of his IGN by now. This could only mean that they have no intention of making a fortune from this, right?”

Brother Assist merely smiled.

“Have you already readied the posts on the forums?” Young Master Han asked.

“Mhm-mhm. They are designated to automatically refresh and post. The first thread should be up already,” Brother Assist replied.

“This scheme of yours... you could have done this on your own without involving any of us,” Young Master Han said.

Brother Assist only smiled, not saying a word.

“You’re just afraid of Miles exploding from anger in response to your action, so you strung the rest of us along for extra insurance,” Young Master Han surmised.

“What? It’s just a good opportunity for all of us to profit!” Brother Assist weakly denied.

“What for? If it is properly arranged, Miles won’t even have a clue of this plan,” Young Master Han said.

Brother Assist politely laughed, “He’ll become suspicious of too many chance encounters. It’s nothing if he occasionally meets someone who brings up the matter to him, but if everyone he meets approaches him for the same reason, he will definitely wise up regarding the plan.”

“You’ve planned this in great detail, I see,” Young Master Han remarked dryly.

“He he he!”

“I wish you success,” Young Master Han said.

“Oh, come on. You’ve got a stake in this, as well!” Brother Assist exclaimed confidently.

At this time, Gu Fei who had just left Ray’s Bar, made his way over to a generic tavern in Yunduan City’s central plaza. Xi Xiaotian waved him over from a corner once he entered the tavern.

Gu Fei walked over. When he said that he had something on, it was actually Xi Xiaotian calling him out to meet. Although they had long added each other as friends, this was the first time she had sent him an invitation to meet. Gu Fei was curious of the reason behind it, so he agreed to meet up with her.

Someone else was sitting beside Xi Xiaotian by the corner table. This person turned his head over and felt shocked when he saw Gu Fei, “It’s you!”

“You guys know each other?” Xi Xiaotian was mildly surprised.

“Young Master’s Elite and Amethyst Rebirth... My guild and mercenary group were defeated by them, and you just happened to belong to these two groups...” The person sitting with Xi Xiaotian on the table was the guild leader of Cloud Herder, Foe-herder. “In a sense, you can say that we are fated to meet each other.”

Chapter 183 - He that runs fastest gets the ring.

Foe-herder had suffered many hardships to get the IGN ‘Thousand Miles Drunk’. Just this afternoon alone, he had experienced being disdained by over fifty Amethyst Rebirth ladies – a matter that any man would find heartbreaking.

At his wit’s end, Foe-herder finally emailed Xi Xiaotian to discuss the matter at hand. Nonetheless, no sane person would purchase a name at the high price of 1000 gold coins. Foe-herder decided that if the lady still insisted on the price of 1000 gold coins for just a name, he would slay her where she stood.

In the end, Foe-herder was rather satisfied when Xi Xiaotian said that she would not only provide the Mage’s name but also set up a face-to-face meeting between them.

Both parties made their way to the tavern by the central plaza once they had come to an agreement on the payment. Along the way, Foe-herder was wondering how he could test the Mage’s capabilities as the possibility existed of Xi Xiaotian teaming up with a random Mage to trick him. But when he saw that the Mage who had showed up was Gu Fei, he immediately felt assured.

Foe-herder recognized Gu Fei as the Mage who had crossed swords with him before at the mercenary PvP tournament. Although Gu Fei’s job that day was to run and hide, Foe-herder could tell that he was a skilled player. He quite believed that he was the Mage that he had been looking for.

As Foe-herder thought of this, he noticed Gu Fei’s expression turning dark as he fixed Xi Xiaotian a vicious glare.

“Bro, take a seat!” Foe-herder feebly offered.

Gu Fei sat down.

“Let’s add each other as friends!” Foe-herder requested. Laying

the groundwork was important in building a solid foundation, as Foe-herder knew that Gu Fei would not defect over to his guild just because he asked him to. But as long as they added each other as friends, he would have the means to contact Gu Fei and slowly persuade the latter into joining his guild. That alone was worth spending this large amount of money.

“What for?” Gu Fei asked Foe-herder. After hearing from the ladies about Foe-herder’s deplorable actions, Gu Fei no longer viewed him in a favorable light. He knew very well of Foe-herder’s intention, so he planned to reject him outright.

“Oh, it’s nothing serious... I just wanna be friends with you, bro,” Foe-herder decided to proceed with his recruitment plan slowly. Why would a player agree to switch guilds for no good reason? Therefore, it was better for him to add Gu Fei as a friend first while he thought of ways to entice the latter into joining his guild.

Foe-herder had calculated his every move, yet Gu Fei unexpectedly denied his request, “I don’t want to!”

“Why... Why not?” Foe-herder asked, perplexed.

“Uhh... I don’t like your name,” Gu Fei replied.

The reason he gave was very childish, yet Foe-herder could not find a way around it, leaving him speechless for a moment.

“We’re leaving!” Gu Fei stood up and dragged Xi Xiaotian along with him.

“Huh?” Xi Xiaotian was at a loss as Gu Fei continued to drag her toward the tavern’s doorway.

“Sigh...” Foe-herder finally realized what was happening and quickly got up to chase after the two.

Xi Xiaotian kept pace with Gu Fei as she looked backward to address Foe-herder, “Hey!” To those not privy to the situation, she and Foe-herder appeared to be a pair of lovers that was being forcefully separated by the evil Gu Fei. “You haven’t paid me fully,

so I'll contact you later." These words of hers effectively broke that illusion.

Gu Fei and Xi Xiaotian finally exited the tavern. Foe-herder tried to chase after them, but he was soon left in the dust.

With Gu Fei being a full-Agility Mage and Xi Xiaotian being a full-Agility Archer, Foe-herder could only helplessly watch them become distant blurs.

Only when Foe-herder was no longer in sight that Gu Fei stopped rushing forward. Xi Xiaotian was nonplussed, "What's with you?"

"How much did you charge for this meet-up between me and Foe-herder?" Gu Fei asked.

"Umm... 400 gold coins, to be exact. I originally wanted 1000 gold coins, but all seem to be suffering from financial crisis nowadays, so they were grinding their teeth in anger and refused to do business with me when I asked for that kind of payment. In the end, we agreed on 400 gold coins. I have yet to collect the total fee since he only gave me a deposit of 100 gold coins just then, so I am still missing 300 gold coins... Oh, and the remaining 300 gold coins are meant for you, you know! But since we've ditched him, I bet he is thinking twice about giving us the rest of the payment... Since I'm such a nice lady, I'll just split the 100 gold coins I've gotten from him with you!" With that, Xi Xiaotian took out her coin purse from her dimensional pocket. Dangling it before Gu Fei, Xi Xiaotian made it look as if she was about to pour all its contents, "Reach out your hand!"

Gu Fei wanted to spit out the anger welling up in him, yet he could not bring himself to do so and only shake his head, "No, thanks."

"Why not?" Xi Xiaotian asked.

Gu Fei took a deep breath, "Next time you think of a scheme to get rich quickly, please do it without involving me." He then

walked away.

Xi Xiaotian stood on one spot for quite a while before coming back to her senses and quickly running after Gu Fei. It was at this moment that an arrow on Snipe whistled through the air from a side alley.

Xi Xiaotian's reaction speed was good and she managed to dodge that arrow. A shout of "Over here!" made Gu Fei look backward, only to see a bunch of players surrounding Xi Xiaotian.

Gu Fei was about to pull out his sword from his dimensional pocket when he heard the surrounding players say, "You're a swindler!" Pausing, he eased his grip on the sword hilt inside his dimensional pocket.

"Who swindled whom?!" Xi Xiaotian tried to defend herself from the accusation, but the group of men was clearly not here to listen to her explanation, and they proceeded to bombard her with their attacks.

Xi Xiaotian tried to slip through a gap among them, yet she was hurtled back into the encirclement by a Warrior's Cyclone. With only a sliver of HP, the two Mages' spells promptly turned Xi Xiaotian into a beam of white light.

"Let's head to the Archer Range next!" some men shouted as they moved to run toward the said direction. Gu Fei spotted a few familiar faces among them and exclaimed, "Are you guys from Cloud Herder?"

The men regarded Gu Fei with suspicion as one of them nodded his head, "Yup!"

"How did that woman just now swindle you guys?" Gu Fei asked.

"Who are you?" The men suspiciously asked Gu Fei as they exchanged glances with one another.

"I've also been cheated by her before." This statement of Gu Fei held some truth.

“We actually don’t know how, but our guild leader said that she had swindled us,” someone among the men replied. The rest disregarded Gu Fei and rushed toward the Archer Range.

Waiting for a bit, he also headed to the Archer Range using a different path.

Along the way, he saw quite a few players making their way toward the same direction. Quite a few familiar faces that he had seen during yesterday’s match clued him to the fact that they were all members of Cloud Herder Guild.

Gu Fei was faster than the average players, yet quite a few players were already gathered at the Archer Range when he arrived.

The place he and Xi Xiaotian had just been was not far from the Archer Range. Nonetheless, only one thing would explain why Gu Fei with his fast movement speed arrived later than so many others: this was a premeditated hunt.

This ambush of theirs is ridiculous! Who would be foolish enough to leave the safe zone if they’re openly blocking the entrance like that?! The experienced fighter Gu Fei muttered to himself as he looked at the sight in front of the Archer Range and eavesdropped on the Cloud Herder men’s conversation.

“Where is she?” someone shouted.

“I don’t know. I haven’t seen her at all,” someone answered, clearly at a loss himself.

Many entered the safe zone and searched the place, yet they saw no traces of her.

“She must have logged off!” someone guessed.

Gu Fei opened up his friends list and glanced at it. Indeed, Xi Xiaotian’s name was darkened on the display. It seemed that she knew how to deal with people trying to take revenge on her and promptly logged off after getting killed once. This caused the ambushers outside to doubt if she had been sent here in the first

place.

It was truly disappointing to discover that their target had logged off despite making many preparations to hunt her. Whoever experienced this would only feel helpless inside, as this was not a problem that could be resolved in-game.

The Cloud Herder's players were about to leave the area dispiritedly when someone shouted, "Guild Leader is here!"

Everyone turned toward a certain direction. Gu Fei, who was wedged among them, stretched his neck out to have a look toward that direction as well. Indeed, Foe-herder and several other guildmates were striding over. "Where is she?" Foe-herder immediately asked once he was close enough to his men at the Archer Range.

"She logged off," everyone reported to him regrettably.

Foe-herder checked his friends list and saw that this was really the case. "F*ck!" he cursed.

"Guild Leader, what exactly happened?" some of them were clueless as to what had prompted their guild leader to order this manhunt.

"That woman colluded with another Mage to pose as the man we are looking for!" Foe-herder replied.

"I'm sure some of you have seen that fake Mage before. It's that Mage of Young Master's Elite, the one whom we've fought in the mercenary PvP tournament!" Foe-herder explained further.

Gu Fei quickly lowered his head in the crowd. Only a few members of Cloud Herder could actually identify him, as not many of them had fought with him directly. They might even have an easier time recognizing the back of Gu Fei instead of his face since his back was what they could see when they were chasing after him during their PvP match.

Each of them immediately condemned the swindling duo openly.

Gu Fei could not stand being accused like that and promptly squeezed his way out of the crowd, saying, “Excuse me. Isn’t this just a misunderstanding?”

Chapter 184 - One Hundred Kills

Initially, Foe-herder was certain that Gu Fei was the Mage that he was looking for, but he was now considering the possibility of Xi Xiaotian bringing an imposter to scam him out of his money. Is it really necessary for them to leave hastily like that even if he is reluctant to add me as a friend? Something seems off... There was also the fact that Gu Fei had just given Foe-herder a nonsensical excuse on why he refuse to add him as a friend, causing the latter to become even more suspicious of the whole matter.

It was a rough day for Foe-herder. His attempt to find out the identity of the mysterious Mage had caused others to treat the players of his guild as weirdos with how they kept on asking the same question around the city. The worst thing here was that the Amethyst Rebirth's ladies hated him now after he had tried to get the mysterious Mage's IGN from them through bribery. Foe-herder was not in a good mood from the start, and after Gu Fei and Xi Xiaotian left without a word, he was no longer thinking clearly and simply assumed that Xi Xiaotian was just trying to swindle him. In a fit of rage, he mobilized his entire guild to hunt those two down.

When the Cloud Herder's members asked him how much he had been cheated off by Xi Xiaotian, Foe-herder felt slightly embarrassed to tell them that it was only 100 gold coins. While the amount was not small, it was too little to warrant mobilizing many players of his guild. However, he could care less about that right now as he only wanted to vent his frustration and seek revenge from those two who had made a fool of him.

It was human nature to feel like that, of course. Would anyone just laugh it off if someone raised his or her hopes up, only to smash them to pieces later by revealing that everything was but a scam?

But when Foe-herder was about to deploy his entire guild for

their first-ever organized manhunt, the Mage Gu Fei squeezed his way through the crowd and spoke aloud to him, causing Foe-herder to be dumbfounded.

“Who’s this guy?” the men of Cloud Herder whispered to one another. As expected, not many could recognize Gu Fei’s face with his fast movement speed in their previous PvP match.

“Just what is up with him?” Foe-herder was utterly confused.

“I assure you that this is just a huge misunderstanding, so can you please disperse everyone first?” Gu Fei then turned around and waved his hands dismissively to the surrounding Cloud Herder members, “Everyone can leave already!”

Some simpletons of Cloud Herder began to take their leave upon hearing Gu Fei, so Foe-herder quickly sent out a command, “Don’t leave just yet, everyone.” As Gu Fei innocently faced him once more, Foe-herder said, “Give me an explanation for all this.”

“Xi Xiaotian didn’t lie to you. I am truly the man you’re looking for,” Gu Fei said.

“You are the masked Mage of Amethyst Rebirth during our guild match?” Foe-herder asked.

Gu Fei nodded his head.

“How are you gonna prove it?” Foe-herder pressed on.

Gu Fei was vexed. Being a full-blooded man, he felt embarrassed that he had entered an all-female guild before, so he had done everything to prevent others from knowing about it. Who knew that a day would come where he actually had to prove his Amethyst Rebirth membership?

Seeing that Gu Fei was speechless for a moment, the members of Cloud Herder thought that Foe-herder was in the right and lifted their weapons in hand.

Seems like this crowd won’t be pacified without me presenting

some evidence, Gu Fei thought to himself. While he was good at killing people, he did not know how to deal with such a situation!

Foe-herder coldly snorted, “There’s no way we will believe your claim of being a member of Amethyst Rebirth without proof; can you show us your guild emblem?”

Gu Fei was once more regretful. The guild emblem Foe-herder spoke of existed precisely to prove a player’s guild membership. Any players could prove that they were part of certain guilds so long as they had their respective guild emblems.

Luo Luo had once given him this item, but Gu Fei had actually politely rejected it, believing that he would not be in the guild for long. As a corollary, he had become the only player in Parallel World without his guild’s emblem. Now that he had to prove his guild membership to other players, Gu Fei could only feebly say, “That... Erm... I forgot to bring it along...”

Everything suddenly became quiet. A guild emblem was an item with a specific purpose. It could be placed in a slot inside the dimensional pocket and would not take up space; it would also not take up an equipment slot when worn. It did not even weigh a thing when held in hand. Besides not possessing it in the first place, there was no reason that one would actually “forget to bring it along”.

With that, the players of Cloud Herder started making their moves. Archers nocked their arrows, Mages raised their magic staves, Thieves vanished from view, and Warriors pointed their weapons to Gu Fei. He hurriedly cried out, “Don’t be so hasty! Is there another way to prove my identity?”

“Another way? You can try killing all of us, then. Should be easy for you if you really are the Mage that we’re looking for,” Foe-herder rasped out coldly.

Hearing that, Gu Fei seriously checked his surroundings. Cloud Herder Guild had a hundred men surrounding him here at the

Archer Range. This situation was similar to that time he had been left by himself in the frontline of Carouse Guild. Except on that day, he had appeared into the opposing guild's defensive formation in a way that was akin to an instantaneous movement, allowing him to catch the enemies by surprise.

Right now, the members of Cloud Herder were fully prepared. In this tight encirclement, Gu Fei did not have any way to avoid their Mages' AOE spells or to cast his spells without being interrupted. Seeing the empty, unguarded space behind Cloud Herder's PvP formation, Gu Fei wished that he had already learned Blink by now.

"What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?" Foe-herder cruelly laughed.

"The difficulty is too high. Can you lower your standard a bit and just assign twenty to thirty of your men to test me out?" Gu Fei asked.

All the players of Cloud Herder felt stunned. They knew that Foe-herder had said those words flippantly, yet Gu Fei had apparently taken him seriously. Although he did not say that he could kill everyone present, challenging twenty to thirty of them was already daring enough. Foe-herder was still hesitating when Gu Fei's eyes suddenly shone and he excitedly said, "I got it! I will fight all of you at once, but under the condition that no one can use their skills. How does that sound?"

The eyes of the Cloud Herder's men almost fell off. Fighting without any spells or skills would lower their Attack Power, yet the man before them was a Mage. A Mage's fighting prowess without his spell was equivalent to zero, so what was he trying to accomplish by suggesting such a thing?

Foe-herder dazedly looked at Gu Fei as he carefully considered the proposition for a moment. Mentally planning out something, he gave Gu Fei a slight smile, "That's a rather interesting

suggestion. Alright, let's play according to it."

"Wonderful! Just wonderful!" Gu Fei excitedly rubbed his hands together.

Foe-herder raised his claymore as he addressed his guildmates, "Everyone, listen up! No one is allowed to use any skills or spells. We're only using basic attacks."

As all dazedly nodded their heads, Foe-herder said on the guild channel, "This guy's movement speed is fast, so maybe he is just trying to think of a way of escape. Finish him off with skills if he tries pulling something like that."

Foe-herder's words made the players who had participated in the mercenary PvP tournament recall how this Mage had left them in the dust, causing them to praise Foe-herder's foresight. "His intention is to escape our encirclement by relying on his speed amid our weak attacks" was what those of Cloud Herder were thinking right now.

Foe-herder instantly felt more confident with his judgment after seeing the praises from everyone on the guild channel. He then ordered some Thieves to remain on Stealth outside the encirclement to intercept the Mage's escape routes. He also positioned his men to counter situations, such as "What if the Mage suddenly uses skills", "What if he escapes into a safe zone", and so on, from popping up.

All in all, the entire Cloud Herder believed that Gu Fei was up to some tricks. How else would a Mage fight a hundred players without the use of spells?

"Boss of Cloud Herder, can we begin now?" Gu Fei asked.

Foe-herder carefully reviewed the formation he had set up. Upon ensuring that Gu Fei would have no way of escaping their encirclement, he nodded his head, "Yes. Let's!"

"Awesome!" Gu Fei excitedly said. His left hand pulled out a

sword, as his right hand held a Chinese broadsword. He then leaned his back against the outside wall of the safe zone.

Taking a step backward instead of coming forward to meet us, it seems that he really plans to run away! But... What's up with his two weapons? The entire Cloud Herder had doubts on why Gu Fei was pulling out two weapons, but their numerical superiority of a hundred men against one Mage without spells made them fearless. Without waiting for Foe-herder's order, four Warriors stepped out of the formation and charged toward Gu Fei.

In situations where everyone could not use skills or cast spells, the Warrior could be considered as the strongest job class in Parallel World. The four Warriors swung their claymores at Gu Fei's head, intending to slay him with one stroke.

However, Gu Fei's fast movement speed made it so that a skill-less Warrior was his least dangerous opponent. He was only worried about the high defense that a Warrior's armor provided, and the possibility of facing off against job classes with high defense stat was precisely why he had decided to wield Sacred Flames of Baptism.

The four men's swords were easily dodged by Gu Fei. He then lifted his right hand to perform Yi Shi Er Niao, a sword move that was mainly used to cut two enemies at once.

Gu Fei's Agility was already high enough to use this sword move perfectly when he was at level 38, so of course he would have no issue pulling off this sword move at his current level. The two Warriors could not even see Gu Fei clearly when he slashed on to their chests.

The Chinese broadsword's damage output was low, but the sudden additional fire attack that was procced afterward managed to frighten the two Warriors. Before they could recover their senses, the Chinese broadsword had once again flashed before their eyes. The two Warriors took the full brunt of this fast second

strike as they remained frozen from shock just then. By the time they repositioned their claymores before them, Gu Fei's fast third stroke had already arrived on them. At this decisive moment, the two unexpectedly began to coordinate their attacks. One tried to block Gu Fei's incoming slash, while another continued to slash at their target.

Things seemed to be going well for these two Warriors, as one managed to block Sacred Flames of Baptism and prevent it from proccing again, while another was able to raise his claymore high up in the air and slash it downward to Gu Fei in the next moment. Gu Fei tried blocking the attacking Warrior's downward slash by holding Moonlit Nightfalls horizontally on his left arm, but his inferior Strength allowed the attacking Warrior's downward slash to force Moonlit Nightfalls into threatening his own flesh instead. The attacking Warrior's heart was filled with elation as he saw that he was about to deal damage to Gu Fei, but in the next moment, Gu Fei forcefully turned his entire body to the right, redirecting the attacking Warrior's claymore to clash with his companion's weapon that was supposed to be restraining Sacred Flames of Baptism on Gu Fei's right hand.

Now that it was no longer being blocked by the enemies, Gu Fei took this chance to weave Sacred Flames of Baptism again, proccing another bout of fire on the two.

The two other Warriors joined the skirmish at this point, yet Gu Fei easily took on all four of them. While his right hand dealt attacks using Sacred Flames of Baptism, his left hand blocked or parried blows using Moonlit Nightfalls.

Although the weapon in his non-dominant hand could cause a slight defense Verdict, Gu Fei's flawless method of using the incoming attacks' force to redirect the other blows allowed him to stay unharmed and for Verdict to get canceled. Each time the four Warriors' claymores clashed against Gu Fei's sword, they would feel their attacks being guided into different directions.

Sacred Flames of Baptism's attacks were relentless. The Warriors' HP was steadily burned off with every slash and cut of Gu Fei. In the blink of an eye, one of the Warriors succumbed to his death and disappeared in a blaze of fire.

Gu Fei was shocked. Feeling somewhat remorseful at what he had unintentionally done, he told the other three men, "Retreat when your HP turns red! It's a shame to drop a level just because of this."

The three became furious when they heard this, even as fear gripped their hearts. They bellowed and resolved to never back down.

The Cloud Herder's members surrounding the skirmish finally realized that Gu Fei was a formidable opponent who had no intention of running away, so many of them moved to join the skirmish in an attempt to suppress him.

Since Gu Fei had a wall behind him, he only had to deal with the players before him in the one-hundred-eighty-degree arc. Although Cloud Herder had almost over a hundred members present, only a handful of them could engage Gu Fei in that limited area. Therefore, Gu Fei was dauntless and easily matched them blow for blow.

Soon, two more men fell. Gu Fei once more expressed, "Retreat when your HP turns red!" The Cloud Herder's hundred men now believed that if this continued, they would all truly be decimated.

Chapter 185 - A Surprising Resolution

Gu Fei did not attempt to cover up his kung fu – his fighting tempo was flawless and his every move was cleverly executed. Although none of the Cloud Herder players knew kung fu, they could tell that their current foe was someone who had dabbled in kung fu before.

A kung fu expert would always have a huge advantage when facing people who knew nothing of martial arts. Nonetheless, if a physical brawl were to occur in reality, one could only beat up two or three people at most in a timeframe no matter how great of a fighting expert he or she was, and going up against dozens or hundreds of people was definitely out of the question. In the real world, facing off against four or five enemies at the same time was already highly improbable, as no ordinary people could withstand and endure a prolonged brawling session when everyone had issues with their endurance and stamina.

Real life was unlike the Saint Seiya series, where the exhausted main characters could suddenly revitalize themselves and continue fighting by just visualizing the goddess Athena in their hearts. No god or goddess would descend to relieve someone from a fight when one's energy was totally expended, and one finger-poke was all that was needed to deal with someone who was totally spent. No matter how skilled one was, he or she could never triumph over physical and mental fatigue.

However, Gu Fei was not in the real world right now but in a game. Although the game sought to completely mimic reality, one aspect that it extremely differed was how fatigue was calculated.

At the end of the day, a MMO existed to provide people continuous enjoyment. And since all game companies' purpose was to earn more profit from their games, they would naturally eliminate anything that hindered them from achieving this goal, and this concept of 'tiredness' was one such thing.

As such, Gu Fei was not even a bit tired right now, and the only thing he could feel was utter enjoyment.

This fight was actually boring to watch, as no skills or spells were being used by the combatants. In fact, Gu Fei's Sacred Flames of Baptism was the only thing that disrupted the monotony of this PvP with its occasional bouts of flame.

Everyone of Cloud Herder was currently feeling rather awkward. Gu Fei made perfect use of the surroundings to limit his attackers to four men at a time. Moreover, these four men's attack angles were restricted to vertical slashes or oblique cuts. Executing a horizontal swing was troublesome for the four men as it required the three to squeeze together to give the fourth man enough space to do so.

Gu Fei kept reminding the enemies to 'retreat when their HP turned red' so much so that many of them had already committed the phrase to their hearts. However, none was willing to be the first one to do so, so they could only stiffly face him.

Since the opponents were not backing down, Gu Fei had no choice but to kill them. Besides, he was not the type to stay his hands out of courtesy or kindness. Had this been when Gu Fei first played the game, he would not have even reminded them about their HP. Having played the game for quite some time, he now knew how difficult it was for players to grind levels. This knowledge of the gamers' greatest fear caused him to feel obligated to remind them of their HP whenever he PvPed with them.

In no time at all, another one died under Gu Fei's excellent swordsmanship. Besides the new player that filled up the freshly vacated spot, the HP of the other three players facing Gu Fei was already in the red. Looking to their left and right, each of them secretly hoped for their comrades to give up the fight, so that they could do so as well. Sadly, none of them was willing to be viewed as the first 'coward' that retreated from the fight.

The three were crestfallen but they persisted still. Suddenly, someone from behind them shouted, “Retreat once your HP turns red.”

Everyone recognized the voice as belonging to their guild leader, Foe-herder, and felt relieved. His words were deemed by all as an excuse for them to retreat. Retreating as per his instruction meant that none of them had to fight Gu Fei to death. The three men who were engaging Gu Fei in the fight immediately retreated to their guild’s PvP formation.

Their vacated positions were very quickly filled up as the skirmish raged on. With Foe-herder’s declaration, none died fighting any longer. In a short while, two men retreated from the fight as their replacements stepped in.

This scenario played out for quite a while, as the Cloud Herder’s PvP formation adapted itself into a very unique configuration. When almost everyone present was already in the red, Foe-herder became very conflicted on what to do next.

Without any usage of skills, Foe-herder was unsure if he could best the Mage in this fight. He saw that it would be his turn soon as his guildmates had almost all retreated. What face would Foe-herder have left if he also failed at subjugating the Mage?

As he was feeling troubled by this, a member drew closer to Foe-herder, “Guild Leader, we can’t keep this up.”

“Oh?”

“That Mage is really skilled. If his plan of not using any skills or spells carries on, no one will be able to deal with him at all as long as he keeps this up without making any mistakes.”

“I know that...” Foe-herder of course knew of this fact as well, so he was hoping for Gu Fei to slip up!

“Guild Leader, we don’t really need to pit ourselves against him like this. His attacks can’t insta-kill any of us. If all our brothers

throw themselves at him, he won't be able to dodge our assault with his back against the wall. I believe just four of us are enough to immobilize him by squeezing him to the wall."

"This..." Foe-herder had also thought of this idea, but he had been reluctant to do it, deeming it as somewhat despicable. Expectedly, this person's suggestion was immediately vetoed by another, "Isn't that too despicable?"

"What else can we do, then?"

"It's just not a good idea."

"We'll let Guild Leader decide, then!" The ball was ultimately pushed toward Foe-herder.

Foe-herder hesitated once more, as the other person urged, "Just do it, Guild Leader. That man is just too strong."

"Too strong..." When Foe-herder heard these words, he promptly raised his hand, "Stop!"

The four men who were surrounding Gu Fei currently were feeling extremely miserable that none of their blows would connect to the target, as he was either dodging their weapons or interrupting their attacks with his sword, so Foe-herder's command to stop the fight was like a prize winning declaration to the four, and they happily stopped their assault.

"There's no need for us to fight anymore." Foe-herder said, "You're very strong, indeed!" His underling's comment about Gu Fei being 'too strong' reminded Foe-herder of why they had started this fight in the first place.

It was to test Gu Fei's strength and see if he was truly the indomitable black-clothed Mage.

Although the skill Gu Fei had displayed was different from the black-clothed Mage's high Magic Attack Power, the fact that he was an expert was no longer a point of contention.

Naturally, they no longer needed to carry on with fighting with that being the case. It did not matter whether he was the black-clothed Mage or not, as Foe-herder's intention remained the same: to poach.

"Ahem..." Foe-herder cleared his throat as he commended Gu Fei, "Brother, your skill is the real deal. Have you trained before?"

"Just a little," was every martial artist's humble response to a compliment regarding their fighting prowess.

Foe-herder did not care for it and merely asked, "What guild are you currently in, bro?"

"Amethyst Rebirth!" Gu Fei replied.

"Are you really that same person?" Foe-herder asked.

"That's right!" Gu Fei answered. Cloud Herder's posters were scattered all over the city. Gu Fei casually picked up one and pointed a finger to it, "I'm this guy."

Foe-herder inhaled deeply. Just as he was about to begin convincing Gu Fei to leave his current guild, a voice suddenly hollered, "What's going on here?! Why is everyone crowding this place?"

Someone forcefully squeezed through the Cloud Herder Guild's encirclement and gazed at the center. Seeing Gu Fei standing alone in the core of this crowd, the person gleefully called out, "Ah, it's you! I was just looking for you!"

Gu Fei glanced over and recognized this man as the despicable and utterly reprehensible Sakurazaka Moony.

Foe-herder also recognized Sakurazaka Moony. While they did not exactly have a close relationship, they would at least exchange a few words whenever they met each other on the streets. It could be said that they had a budding friendship going on.

Foe-herder knew that Sakurazaka Moony was a high-ranking

expert on the experience leaderboard and was currently managing a small guild, so his heart constricted when he heard him say that he had been looking for Gu Fei. Is Moony trying to poach him, as well? Foe-herder thought to himself. Stepping forward, he arrived beside Sakurazaka Moony, “Hey, it’s been a while!”

“Oi, Old Herder! Why are you here?” He then looked around him and asked, “All your guildmates are here, too! What’s going on?”

Before Foe-herder could answer, Sakurazaka Moony saw the people trapping Gu Fei against the wall and swiftly grasped the situation. He patted Foe-herder’s shoulder and said, “Old Herder, I know this man. Give me some face and don’t make things difficult for him.”

Gu Fei could not help but feel uncomfortable at how serious Sakurazaka Moony was carrying himself at the moment. His current expression was the complete opposite of his usual easy-going demeanor! Right now, any onlookers would mistake him for someone who was trying to sort things out for a friend who had gotten into a tricky situation.

“You’re mistaken!” Foe-herder’s eyes turned anxious, “It’s just a little misunderstanding. Actually, we’re warmly inviting brother here to join our guild.”

“Join your guild?” Sakurazaka Moony reacted as if he had just heard the world’s greatest joke. Showing an exaggerated look of surprise, he stepped toward Gu Fei and grabbed his shoulder, “Miles bro here is just like me. He’s not gonna be interested in your lousy guild.”

Foe-herder abruptly froze upon hearing Sakurazaka Moony’s words. He completely understood what Sakurazaka Moony meant when he said, “Just like me.”

When they had first met, Foe-herder had also done his best to invite Sakurazaka Moony into Cloud Herder Guild. But the latter had decisively rejected his offer, even explaining his hobby to Foe-

herder and expressing his desire to work hard toward his goal. Not too long after, Foe-herder learned that this man had established an extremely detestable guild by gathering a bunch of players who had the same loose morals as him. It was after this that Foe-herder gave up any plans to rope him into Cloud Herder Guild. Right now, Sakurazaka Moony's was implying that Gu Fei was a fellow 'Daoist' that shared the same interest of chasing skirts.

At the same time, Sakurazaka Moony continued his introduction, "Furthermore, Miles here could be said to be the most outstanding individual among us, 'Daoists'. Just his achievement of getting into Amethyst Rebirth left the rest of us reveling in envy and admiration."

It all makes sense to me now... Foe-herder had a sudden epiphany, Only someone who shares the mindset of Moony would willingly stay in that weak all-female guild after all... Why haven't I thought of this sooner?

Foe-herder abruptly felt disappointed when he thought of this. The look he now gave Gu Fei had turned into disappointment from admiration for the latter's lowly aspirations. Gazing at the two men contemptuously, he waved at his men, "Let's leave!"

"Wait a minute! You guys are mistaken!"

"What's mistaken?! Enough with that nonsense! I have something urgent I need you for!" Sakurazaka Moony stopped Gu Fei from chasing after Cloud Herder to explain himself.

Chapter 186 - Points System

Gu Fei faced Sakurazaka Moony who was looking at him with adulation and asked, “Why are you looking at me like that?”

Sakurazaka Moony wiped the drool off his mouth, “That hottie this morning. What’s her name?”

“Eh? You didn’t even manage to get her name?” Gu Fei thought that Sakurazaka Moony would be victorious in his and the stubborn Vast Lushness’ collision given the level of shameless he had previously displayed at Peddlers’ Street 2.

Sakurazaka Moony dejectedly shook his head, “Vicious. That woman is very vicious.”

“What happened?” Gu Fei asked.

“Thinking that she finally agreed to my proposition, I followed her to a high-level grinding map this morning. When we got there, she suddenly held me down—”

“Whoa! Vicious indeed!” Gu Fei exclaimed.

“I know, right!?” Sakurazaka Moony gave a bitter smile, continuing his recount, “Following that, we got surrounded by dozens of monsters and subsequently sent back to the city.”

Gu Fei was dumbfounded, “So where is she right now?”

“I don’t know... She died long before I did,” Sakurazaka Moony replied.

“How bold of her to actually use a suicide attack just to get away from you,” Gu Fei commented.

Sakurazaka Moony was close to tears, “Oh, how regretful I am....”

“Now you know what she’s made of!” Gu Fei pitied him. Sakurazaka Moony was originally ranked eighteenth on the Archer leaderboard, which meant that he was probably close to reaching

level 41. Now... Gu Fei used Appraisal on him and saw that he was down to level 39.

“Why did I suddenly became nervous when she hugged me?! I should’ve taken that chance to grope a feel or two!” Sakurazaka Moony bemoaned.

Gu Fei was speechless, not having expected this kind of reaction.

“But I’m sure you wouldn’t make such a mistake if this happened to you,” Sakurazaka Moony gazed at him in adoration once more.

“I’m leaving.” Gu Fei no longer wished to waste time conversing with Sakurazaka Moony. He recalled how he had let the latter do all the talking when Foe-herder was confronting them both, and that alone was enough for Foe-herder to get the wrong idea about how they were a duo of skirt-chasers, simply because Sakurazaka Moony’s reputation’s as a lecherous person was so deeply ingrained in everyone’s mind.

“Hey! Don’t go! You have yet to me what that babe’s name is!” Sakurazaka Moony quickly chased after him. Although his speed had decreased after losing his level, he was still faster than Gu Fei.

Looking at the guild leader of Yunduan City’s most shameless guild, Gu Fei felt duty-bound to protect the women’s message inboxes, including Vast Lushness’, from his harassment. Asking for her consent was the sensible thing to do, but she was unfortunately not online, so he could only lie to Sakurazaka Moony, “I don’t know either.”

“What? Don’t you two know each other?”

“We also know each other, yet I don’t know your name,” Gu Fei made him an example.

“I’m Sakurazaka Moony,” Sakurazaka Moony introduced himself.

“Mhm-mhm. She did not introduce herself to me like this,” Gu Fei said.

“Seriously?” Sakurazaka Moony scrutinized Gu Fei’s face to see whether he was telling the truth or not.

Gu Fei’s eyes shone as he thought of something. Pointing to Sakurazaka Moony’s back, he exclaimed, “Oh, look! A pretty woman!” He then sprinted off.

Unexpectedly, Sakurazaka Moony did not even turn his head a fraction and merely ran after Gu Fei. A short distance later, he once more successfully blocked Gu Fei’s path. Gu Fei was very surprised by this, having expected Sakurazaka Moony to fall for his trick.

Sakurazaka Moony sighed as he shook his head, “A strong gale can fell down even the tallest tree in the forest!”

“What do you mean?” Gu Fei could not understand why he had used such an adage.

“The tallest tree in a forest will always be the first to be buffeted by wind. That lady is the most outstanding tree in the forest, so my strong gale is centered on blowing her away. I’ve already disregarded the other flora and fauna in the forest,” Sakurazaka Moony explained earnestly.

Sakurazaka Moony’s ability to bend the adage to his will was impressive. However, what shocked Gu Fei more was the latter’s revelation that he could devote himself to only one woman.

While Sakurazaka Moony was busy stewing in his regret, Gu Fei took this chance to sneak off. Sakurazaka Moony lacked the will to pester a man, so he promptly gave up chasing after Gu Fei. Looking backward and seeing the man standing so desolately on the street, Gu Fei could not help but feel a twinge of sympathy for him, “I’ll tell you her name once I find it out!”

Sakurazaka Moony happily darted over, “Really?”

“Yeah... Now just leave me alone!” Gu Fei said.

“Where are you off to, bro?” Sakurazaka Moony asked, intending

to send off Gu Fei.

His question made Gu Fei recall something. Glancing at the time, he became depressed. The mercenary PvP tournament officially began at 7 P.M., and it was currently 7:03 P.M. Gu Fei had been too caught up with fighting the Cloud Herder Guild's men that he had actually forgotten about the time.

Gu Fei was a little unwilling to accept his situation, so he bade Sakurazaka Moony a hasty goodbye and rushed toward the teleportation array by the Hall of Mercenaries. Unfortunately for Gu Fei, the system was very impartial. Not one player was able to enter the teleportation array past 7 P.M. Gu Fei tried all sorts of ways to enter but to no avail.

However, today's match did not seem to be an intensive one, as Gu Fei's absence was only met with a smatter of inquiries that lacked anxiety from the others. Just as he was about to ask on the mercenary channel about the progress of the match, five familiar figures were teleported outside the Hall of Mercenaries. With how quick they were sent back out and how at ease they appeared, the result of this round became obvious.

The six headed to Ray's Bar, and Gu Fei peppered them with questions about the match along the way. Learning that the opposing mercenary group only had six members and that they were all subpar, Gu Fei felt somewhat relieved at sitting this round out.

After they got settled at Ray's Bar, Young Master Han started to speak, "After this mercenary PvP tournament ends, there is no doubt that our mercenary business will be on the right track... And how we split the rewards for every request will definitely become an issue. Since constant talks about money have always been something that put a strain on relationships, there's a need for us to seriously go through this and come up with a proper system on how the rewards will be divided among ourselves. "

“Couldn’t we just split things evenly?” Gu Fei asked.

“Such method will definitely rub others the wrong way,” Young Master Han replied.

“Egalitarianism is a very primitive way of doing things!” The rest of the mercenaries were also against Gu Fei’s suggestion.

“Fine. What do you guys suggest?” Gu Fei asked.

“Of course, we will employ something closer to our country’s sentiment of ‘to each according to his contribution’,” the others answered in unison.

“Have you guys already discussed this?” Gu Fei questioned.

“The five exchanged glances and smiled, “This is not our first rodeo on doing group missions in MMOs!”

“Okay... So how exactly are we doing this?” Gu Fei asked.

Young Master Han cleared his throat, “I have decided for our group to follow a kind of point system for our future missions. As the leader, I’ll do the hard work of recording everyone’s contributions during each of our group missions. Our contribution will be converted to points, and whoever has the most points will get a bigger slice of the pie.”

Sword Demon and the rest were evidently used to such a method, as none of them voiced any objection to Young Master Han’s proposal.

“The points will be shown to everyone to maintain transparency. Actually, I’ve taken it upon myself to begin scoring everyone for every match in this whole tournament. Take a look at my notes,” Young Master Han said.

“Oh?” This reveal caused the others to incline their heads toward Young Master Han’s direction, wanting to see what he had written about them.

Young Master Han fished out a booklet from his dimensional

pocket and tossed it on the table. Everyone gathered around it to have a look. While the rest were checking to see how impartial Young Master Han was, Gu Fei was trying to learn exactly how this method worked.

Casually flipping through the booklet, they saw the points for their match with Cloud Herder Guild. This page contained their names. Gu Fei drank in all that he saw and felt amazed at how the human brain could achieve what a computer could not.

If a system calculated their contributions, plenty of aspects would be overlooked. As for Young Master Han, his little booklet actually contained every little detail of their PvP performance. For example, Brother Assist earned himself 10 points for gathering the necessary information on their opponents. This was a contribution that the system would not be able to calculate.

Just that match alone, the members that had sacrificed themselves were appropriately awarded points according to the level of their contributions. Gu Fei, who was the last one standing against the huge army, had earned the high score of 50 points from his action alone.

No one noticed anything wrong with the breakdown of points, resulting in everyone commending Young Master Han's detailed and unbiased work. Casually flipping over to the next page, it showed Young Master Han's point breakdown for himself from the most recent battle. Everyone read the following:

YOUNG MASTER HAN

Tactics: 20 points

Overall strategy: 30 points

Command: 10 points

Talent and brilliance: 10 points

Handsome: 10 points

Leadership: 10 points

Tabulation of points: 10 points

Total score: 100 points

Everyone's expression changed. They hurriedly flipped through the pages and discovered that Young Master Han had earned over 100 points in every match of the mercenary PvP tournament thus far.

During the match with Amethyst mercenary group, Royal God Call and War Without Wounds' 'insubordination', 'disloyalty', 'irresponsibility', and other such issues collectively earned them -100 points each.

"Any negative points will be brought forward to the next assignment, so anyone won't earn any form of recompense until his points are back to positive!" Young Master Han warned them severely. He then took back the booklet. "Alright. I'll write down today's score." Getting a quill, Young Master Han earnestly wrote: Thousand Miles Drunk. Dereliction of duty: -200 points.

"F*ck!" Gu Fei slapped the table and stood up. Royal God Call and War Without Wounds followed suit, "We strongly disagree with this points system."

"Young Master Han. Shamelessness: -500 points!" Royal God Call cried out.

Chapter 187 - Astrological Signs Reading by the Ladies

Five individuals in a private room at Ray's Bar were in uproar over Young Master Han's shameless points system.

Honestly speaking, Gu Fei, Royal God Call, and War Without Wounds had no complaint over being penalized with regard to their actions. Royal God Call and War Without Wounds truly performed rather atrociously in their match with Amethyst mercenary group, while Gu Fei really did not show up for today's match.

Young Master Han harshly dishing out penalties was a given, considering his merciless personality.

What made the three dissatisfied was how Young Master Han had scored himself. To think that they even praised him for being unprejudiced moments ago. It was truly bizarre how he had dared to be transparent with his biased scoring of himself.

Receiving an indignant look from the three, Young Master Han perplexedly took out his booklet once more and looked at what he had scored for himself. He pointed at each page and said, "What's wrong? Everything is written accurately! Tactics, strategy, command, talent, handsomeness, leadership—okay, fine. I admit that that last bit is something I casually added. I'll take it out." He proceeded to cross out 'tabulation of points' and gazed back at the three men before him, "Happy now?"

"Shameless: -500 points!" Royal God Call bellowed.

The room occupants continued to quarrel among themselves until Gu Fei finally suggested assigning Sword Demon as their group's scorer. This suggestion was promptly seconded by Royal God Call and War Without Wounds.

Three among the six-man mercenary group had the same opinion

on this matter: remove Young Master Han from his authoritative position to prevent him from exploiting the points system.

In the end, the booklet for scoring was given to Sword Demon. “Are we going to use the points already written in this?” he asked seriously.

“No!” Royal God Call and War Without Wounds refused, even intending to drag Gu Fei to this matter. Unfortunately for the two, Gu Fei was no longer interested in arguing further now that he had successfully ousted the shameless Young Master Han.

Being deducted for 200 points might seem like a lot, but Gu Fei was more in pain with not being able to participate in the match. Following the argument, a series of discussions was held regarding certain details and issues. Gu Fei quietly listened to their exchanges, as he mainly focused on monitoring the time. He was afraid to make the same mistake and missed out on the guild versus guild tournament, especially since he was looking forward to it more than the mercenary PvP tournament. When it was just an hour before the guild match, Gu Fei hurriedly left Ray’s Bar and made his way to the teleportation array outside the Main Hall of Guilds. Entering the ‘changing room’, he once more casually greeted the ladies and sat by a corner.

When July saw that the members were more or less all present, she walked to the front and gave everyone a grim smile, “Today, we’ve managed to draw a big guild once more.”

Actually, every guild member could see the everyday match-up for the PvP tournament by heading over to the game’s official website. Amethyst Rebirth sadly lacked such passionate individuals, so all were currently waiting with bated breath for July’s announcement of today’s opponent.

July took two deep breaths and said, “We are up against Traversing Four Seas today.”

Gu Fei was never one who cared much about which guild they

would be facing, yet even he was surprised when July announced their opponents of the day. This would be the third consecutive large guild that they had drawn.

Carouse, Cloud Herder, Traversing Four Seas were Yunduan City's top guilds. This was especially true of Carouse and Traversing Four Seas. Who would have thought that a certain guild would be unlucky enough to draw these two large guilds back-to-back?

No one had also thought that any small guild would win against one of these two large guilds, so Carouse's defeat at the hands of Amethyst Rebirth had truly shocked many. If Traversing Four Seas were to meet the same fate as well, Amethyst Rebirth would tacitly become the top guild in everyone's hearts. Naturally, the ladies who had been casually participating in the guild versus guild tournament had no such aspiration.

Everyone attempted to explain this phenomenon through astrology. They determined that Guild Leader July's astrological sign was terribly unlucky this week, which resulted into the guild she was leading to consecutively draw the large guilds.

"Stop!" The Priest Grape, whom Royal God Call had fondness for, said, "Since we have drawn Traversing Four Seas, July's luck this week must be very terrible. Still, as long as we get past this hurdle, whatever guilds we face in the next two days won't be much of an issue. By next week, July's luck should be through the roof."

"Ahhh!" All the ladies were convinced by her assessment and they gathered around Grape to get her to check their weekly, monthly, and even annual luck prospects.

Svelte Dancer also joined them and she repeatedly shouted, "Read my fortune, too! I'm an Aries. ARIES!"

The PvP preparation meeting suddenly digressed into an astrology meeting. Even July did not conduct her usual presentation and just joined the others in discussing their

astrological signs.

Feeling helpless at this, Gu Fei attempted to find out information about the enemies by himself. He knew that Royal God Call was still a member of Traversing Four Seas, so he contacted him first, “How many combatants did your guild send out?”

Ever since the defeat of prominent guilds and mercenary groups at the hands of smaller groups, the entire Yunduan City had started paying more attention to the ‘Grand Kiting’ strategy, where the smaller groups of people would try to win by avoiding confrontations and just keep on running until the time ran out whenever they obtained the higher kill points in the PvP matches.

As the PvP event went on, Amethyst Rebirth and Young Master’s Elite emerged as the two smaller groups, the two dark horses, that had managed to cause a huge upset against the bigger guilds and mercenary groups by depending on this kiting tactic. According to Young Master Han, his motive for coming up with such a strategy from the start was to frighten the bigger groups into reducing their participating members for the upcoming matches, and his long-term plan had worked out well so far.

Right now, Gu Fei was hoping that Traversing Four Seas would have misgivings and consequently reduce their number in the PvP tournament. Asking Royal God Call the amount of enemy participants was his way of finding out if Traversing Four Seas had been affected by Young Master Han’s strategy.

“It should be about seven hundred or so,” Royal God Call replied.

“They did not fall for it...” Gu Fei sucked in a cold breath. He then proceeded to ask Young Master Han for his take on this, only receiving a lackadaisical response, “My strategy is originally planned for our mercenary group’s matches with less than one hundred participants. For the guild versus guild tournament that has hundreds of combatants, even I won’t mind about anyone attempting to kite.”

“Why’s that?” Gu Fei asked.

“Because the strength of a team increases with the number of people in it,” Young Master Han answered.

“Does this mean that Traversing Four Seas has already realized that your kiting strategy is not as scary as imagined?” Gu Fei pressed on.

“It isn’t intended to be scary to begin with; otherwise, we can simply use this one strategy for the whole event. No one is like you who look forward to the enemies having fewer participating players,” Young Master Han remarked dryly.

“I’m not looking forward to that. The more the merrier, I say,” Gu Fei denied.

“Oh? What sort of tactic did you guys prepare for this match, then?” Young Master Han asked.

“Well... Nothing but nonsense if you really want to know ” Gu Fei glumly replied. The Amethyst Rebirth’s PvP preparation meeting had somehow diverged into a discussion about the compatibility between the different astrological signs, and they had even managed to come to an agreement: Scorpio and Cancer had the most efficient and harmonious relationship.

The ladies only snapped back to their senses when the system announced that the match was about to begin in ten seconds. Hurriedly checking the opposing guild’s headcount, the ladies exclaimed “Wow! There are seven hundred three of them!” Their PvP preparation meeting had reached its end in such a casual manner. At least, the ladies gave the remaining ten seconds to Traversing Four Seas and did not totally disregard the opposing guild.

In flashes of white light, everyone was teleported into the PvP arena. Given the number of participants for this match, the map this time was quite similar to the large arena that they were in

when facing Carouse Guild.

“How are we going to fight this guild match?” The ladies asked the two experts in the guild: Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer.

The girls had unknowingly become reliant on them. This was a natural instinct most women had, and the ladies of Amethyst Rebirth were no exception. This included Svelte Dancer. When the other ladies asked the two, she also asked Gu Fei, “How are we going to fight in this match?”

Amethyst Rebirth would hardly pose a challenge to Traversing Four Seas if it fought as one group. This was because the more concentrated they were, the faster they would get eliminated. Gu Fei gave it a thought before waving his hand, “Everyone should disperse! Find a hiding spot each and try not to engage the enemies. Self-preservation is your number one priority in this match.”

Svelte Dancer nodded her head vigorously, “Disperse! Disperse!”

“What about you two?” a lady asked.

Svelte Dancer and Gu Fei looked at each other. Having worked together many times before, they more or less had an idea with regard to each other’s intention.

Svelte Dancer knew that Gu Fei intended for the two of them to do the fighting alone when he told the other ladies to hide. Their method was still the same: drag the time out. “Find yourself a good spot for performing ambushes. I’ll protect you while you cast your spells,” Svelte Dancer said.

Gu Fei nodded his head and the two departed straight toward the enemies’ direction.

“Grape read my fortune and said that I need to find myself a lucky partner this year,” Svelte Dancer wanted to continue talking about astrological signs and attempted to pull Gu Fei into the conversation.

“A lucky partner?” Gu Fei was even less knowledgeable about astrology than online gaming. He could recite the twelve zodiac signs and his own, but that was it.

“Mhm... Help me take note of anyone that may bring me luck,” Svelte Dancer requested.

“Okay...” Gu Fei casually answered. He was not so bored to actually do it, though.

Svelte Dancer actually noticed his half-hearted response, so she irately declared, “Forget it. I’ll just think of you as my lucky partner.”

“Me? Bringing good luck to you?” Gu Fei snorted.

“Only time will tell,” Svelte Dancer replied.

Chapter 188 - Archer Formation

The ladies chose a companion each and went to the various spots of the PvP arena to hide. Along the way, they continued to chat with one another.

Gu Fei could not help but sigh at this. At such a crucial moment, these ladies still have the time to chat with one another. They truly have the air of experts! Conversely, the two real experts jumped into a trench and crept toward the enemies' direction. Gu Fei had the two of them doing this to prevent the enemies from seeing him and Svelte Dancer before they could spot them.

"Must we do this?" Svelte Dancer felt very embarrassed at having to crawl in the trench.

Gu Fei firmly nodded his head, "We are up against seven hundred three men. How else will we have the chance to launch our surprise attack if they can see us even from afar?" Unlike how he would arrogantly charge into his targets when doing 'Bounty Mission', Gu Fei proceeded in this PvP with caution.

While they were stealthily advancing forward, Gu Fei was asking for more information from Royal God Call, "So what sort of the strategy are you guys employing?"

"Archer formation," Royal God Call replied.

"What?" It was a new term for Gu Fei.

"You'll understand when we engage you all," Royal God Call replied vaguely.

"Archer formation... You know what kind of PvP formation that is?" Gu Fei asked Svelte Dancer.

Svelte Dancer shook her head, clueless.

Traveling from one end of the map to the other via this trench was impossible, but the two were not planning to do that and were

merely using this for cover as they proceeded forward, peeking their heads out from time to time to see if they had the enemies in sight and continuing to crawl forward when they spotted no one. Eventually, Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer spied two enemy players ahead that were also doing their scouting from the opposite side.

“You really are my lucky star! Leave these two guys to me!” Svelte Dancer happily said to Gu Fei as she activated Fleetfoot to charge at the enemies.

Svelte Dancer differed from the other Thieves in this aspect. Usually, Thieves would avoid being spotted by others and focused on launching a sneak attack on their enemies. Thieves had low HP after all, so they would be risking their lives if they met the opponents head on. But with Svelte Dancer’s fast speed and top-grade equipment that provided her high defense and Attack Power, she was more than capable of taking any opponent head on.

“My prey...” Gu Fei muttered to himself as he saw her pounce forward to where the two enemies were. Given Svelte Dancer’s speed, he simply had no way of catching up to snatch the prey from her, and he had indeed been reduced to trailing behind Svelte Dancer.

Meanwhile, the two enemy players had also caught sight of Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer and prepared themselves for combat. The two men were the conventional kind of Thieves, so they promptly activated their Stealth when they caught sight of a Mage and a Thief closing in on them.

“Ah! They’re gone!” Svelte Dancer exclaimed as she slowed down her pace.

Gu Fei was still hurrying over from afar, so he could not really tell the exact locations of the enemies on Stealth. Not to mention that the two men had focused all their attention on to Svelte Dancer and had completely disregarded Gu Fei, making it harder for him to sense the presence of the invisible enemies.

The situation was quite perilous, yet Svelte Dancer still fearlessly exclaimed, “I know you guys are still here! Come out quickly!”

It was at this moment that one of the Thieves materialized from behind her and struck her with a large baton, causing a Dizzy status effect on Svelte Dancer that left her immobile.

An opportunity to kill the two by his hands had just emerged, and Gu Fei happily shouted, “Don’t wake her up just yet!”

The Thief on Stealth and the visible Thief positioned themselves behind Svelte Dancer, as they were planning to use Backstab – the current thief skill with the highest damage output – on her together to kill her off. Gu Fei’s shout left them stunned for a bit, but they naturally ignored his request and still plunged their daggers on to her back. And with that, Svelte Dancer was able to move again.

“Sigh...” Gu Fei said disappointedly, “I told you not to wake her up.”

Wasting no time, Svelte Dancer pivoted on her heel once she was able to move again and killed off one of her assailants with a swish of her dagger.

To think that backstabbing this female Thief twice is not enough to kill her off... Her defense must be insanely high! While the Thief was still dazedly thinking this to himself, Svelte Dancer mercilessly stabbed him with her dagger.

Gu Fei did not manage to kill even one of the two enemies, leaving him utterly disappointed as he walked toward her.

Svelte Dancer cheerfully took out a loaf of bread from her dimensional pocket as she called out, “ We’ll continue onward after my HP is recovered.”

Gu Fei helplessly nodded his head. If things continued on in this fashion, Svelte Dance might steal all his possible prey away from him!

As Svelte Dancer sat on the ground and ate her bread, Gu Fei peered all around them and saw a cloud of dust incessantly getting stirred in the distance. It was as if a large group of people were marching forward....

“Hey!” Gu Fei nudged the seated Svelte Dancer using his foot, “It appears that a large number of players are currently heading our way.”

“Where?” Svelte Dancer, who had more or less recovered her HP, stood up and took a look. The cloud of dust was rolling closer with each passing second. Indeed, there appeared to be many people marching toward their direction at a steady pace. “From the looks of things, I expect there to be about two hundred players,” she surmised.

“That’s ridiculous. I say it's about one hundred,” Gu Fei corrected.

“Let’s bet on it!” Svelte Dancer said.

“What are we betting with?”

“1000 gold coins,” Svelte Dancer answered.

Gu Fei did not say another word. Money was a sore issue for him right now.

Svelte Dancer did not pursue the matter anymore and just said, “They really are heading our way... In that case, just hide inside this trench and cast your spell from here! This way, I don’t have to cover for you!”

“Okay,” Gu Fei nodded his head in agreement, even though he was not exactly thrilled at the prospect of insta-killing his enemies with an AOE spell. In fact, Gu Fei disliked this sort of fighting style.

The two lay prone in the trench, watching their enemies’ figures become more defined with each passing moment. As they continued to observe the approaching squad of enemies, they

started to take note of something odd: the marching speed of their enemies. Usually, the marching pace of a huge squad would never be fast, as there was a need for the faster players to match their speed with low-Agility job classes, such as Priests and Warriors. And yet, this particular squad was marching forward at a speed that was unlikely to be possessed by the low-Agility job classes. It was as if this squad was composed entirely of fast-moving individuals....

In a short while, the two finally saw that the advancing squad was entirely made up of Archers. Gu Fei recalled the term ‘archer formation’ that Royal God Call had used. Could it be referring to this squad of Archers before him?

It was at this moment that Svelte Dancer gave him a quick nudge, “They are about to close in on us; get ready!”

As Gu Fei nodded his head, the sound of arrows flying toward them reverberated. Judging from their speed and origin, the arrows were most likely under Snipe. The two swiftly ducked down and many arrows sailed past their heads, landing in the opposite wall of the trench that they were in.

“What sharp eyes they have!” the two exclaimed in unison. They barely peeked half their heads from that trench, yet the Archers easily spotted them from afar.

“Keep on firing your arrows!” said Youthful Reflection, who was one of the core members from that guild. He was the one leading this marching squad of Archers, and he had no intention of stopping the assault now that two enemies had been spotted.

Over a hundred Archers nocked their arrows and drew their bows, releasing another volley on their targets. Upon their release, the arrows blanketed the sky and created a gusty wind. The arrows did not fly straight to Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer but arched high up in the sky before diving toward the trench.

In real life, an arrow’s range was influenced by how much

strength and force an individual applied when he or she was nocking an arrow. This was not the case in Parallel World, and how far the in-game Archers could actually shoot out their arrows was determined by a combination of their equipment and the distance boost provided by their skills, such as Power Shot or Snipe. The in-game archery was easier to master, so one did not actually have to practice that long like in reality to get the hang of firing different types of shots. In a way, the landing spots for the arrows were something that was already predetermined, as the range and distance covered by arrows were all decided by the game's algorithm and data. With enough practice, one would find the arrows he or she fired off to be oddly accurate in hitting the intended spot.

The arrows currently peppering the trench were like a horde of locusts, and the two did their best to find some sort of cover within. Although the arrows were not under any archer skills, ending their lives would be easy under such a heavy barrage.

“I’ll cover for you; bombard them with your spells,” Svelte Dancer frantically yelled to Gu Fei. When she tried to leap out of the trench, Gu Fei had to practically hold her back, “Don’t be silly! There are too many of them.”

“What do we do, then?!”

“We’re moving to another spot.” Gu Fei dragged Svelte Dancer along the trench as they deflected every arrow coming their way with their weapons. This shooting style of arrows relied on gravity, so the speed that the arrows were falling on the ground was not especially fast.

The trench seemed to be aiding the two immensely, as the first turn actually led them to the archer formation’s flank. The squad of Archers was still busy firing waves after waves of arrows to Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer’s previous location, causing Gu Fei to sigh in relief, “Our counterattack starts here.”

The two then leaped out of the ditch. Unfortunately, the enemies were still outside of the range of Gu Fei's AOE spells, so the two of them hurriedly ran toward the enemies' formation in order to get close enough to hit them with spells. But the enemy squad had of course noticed those two's new position when they leaped out of the ditch, and Youthful Reflection proceeded to calmly commanded, "Formation B."

The Archers changed their position following his command and once more had their arrows facing the two members of Amethyst Rebirth.

While the two were feeling stunned by the Archers' change in formation, Youthful Reflection yelled, "FIRE!"

Over a hundred arrows were once more sailing toward Gu Fei and Svelte Dancer like angry locusts. This time, the arrows were flying straight to them. Since the Archers had aimed for the whole surface, the two would have no place to dodge the incoming arrows. Be it left or right, they would be struck dead by the projectiles coming their way.

"Get back in! Get back in!" The two could only dash toward the trench that they had just vacated.

The ditch was just a few steps from them, but the arrows sailing toward them were very fast. Svelte Dancer might make it into the ditch in time, yet Gu Fei who had a slower speed than her would definitely not.

No tears came out of Gu Fei's eyes despite despair settling inside him. Unexpectedly, Svelte Dancer did not sprint to the trench but positioned herself behind Gu Fei instead. She then gave Gu Fei a shove, allowing the latter to not only stumble forward a bit faster but also to be shielded from a few arrows by her.

The two tumbled into the trench and hundreds of arrows went sailing past their heads once more in the next moment.

A few arrows were lodged into her back, but Svelte Dancer managed to remain alive. Panting heavily, she hurriedly munched on a loaf of bread as she said, “We can’t rush over!”

“Yeah!” Gu Fei agreed, saying, “No amount of speed will help us deal with this archer formation, unless we can blink into their midst.”

“‘Blink’?” Svelte Dancer stiffened, asking, “Say, are you at level 40 yet?”

Gu Fei nodded his head.

“And you chose to become a Lightning Mage?”

As Gu Fei nodded his head once more, Svelte Dancer reached into her pocket, “Does that mean you can use this?”

Gu Fei took the item off of her hands. It was a permanent skill scroll for Blink.

Chapter 189 - Translocation

“Where did you get this?” Gu Fei asked, dumbfounded.

Svelte Dancer pouted indignantly, “It's the crappy game company's fault. They did not explain things properly... I thought I could create a unique skill tree through the use of the permanent skill scrolls. After purchasing this Blink Scroll, I was told by the system that I have to become a Lightning Mage to use it.” For the players, game companies would always be the ones at fault whenever there was something that did not go as intended.

Gu Fei asked, “So how many skill scrolls did you manage to collect?”

“Why would I buy more after getting tricked into purchasing this one?” Svelte Dancer knocked Gu Fei's head dismissively.

“So you've only gotten one skill scroll, and it happened to be Blink. Are you sure you're not MY lucky star, instead?” Gu Fei said as he placed his hands on the scroll. Light flashed between Gu Fei's fingers and entered his body. The system then notified Gu Fei that he had learned a new spell—Translocation: Blink.

“You've used it?” It was Svelte Dancer's turn to be flabbergasted this time.

“Yup!” Gu Fei answered as he opened up his skill window and read the following description: [In exchange for a certain amount of mana, the caster can bend time and space to instantly appear at the place he or she is thinking of...]

Killing intent! Gu Fei felt shocked at the intense killing intent emanating from someone near him. He turned his head and saw Svelte Dancer glaring at him with murder in her eyes, as if she was moments away from tearing Gu Fei apart.

“What?” Gu Fei hurriedly asked.

“Who said you could use it?!” Svelte Dancer asked angrily.

“Then why did you pass it to me?” Gu Fei was at a loss.

“I just wanted to show it to you!” Svelte Dancer replied.

“But you can’t use it!” Gu Fei reasoned.

“I could sell it! That’s still money!” Svelte Dancer screamed in frustration.

“Why don’t you sell it to me, then?” Gu Fei bargained.

Svelte Dancer immediately stuck her hand out, “2000 gold coins.”

“So expensive...” Gu Fei stuck his tongue out in defeat.

“I bought it for 1800 gold coins, so I’m only earning 200 gold coins from you,” Svelte Dancer was quite transparent when it came to doing business.

Gu Fei nodded his head and stuck a hand inside his dimensional pocket. He retrieved his coin purse and passed it over to Svelte Dancer.

His casualness about the whole affair surprised Svelte Dancer. Taking the purse, she muttered, “I didn't know that you’re actually a wealthy man...”

Gu Fei sheepishly smiled, “There are only 200 gold coins inside that. Consider that as the profit you’ve made. As for the scroll’s purchase price, I’ll pay you back in installment since I don’t have that much money on me.”

Svelte Dancer grudgingly accepted the payment from Gu Fei after she counted the money in the pouch and confirmed that there were indeed only 200 gold coins inside. As for whether Gu Fei would really fork out the other 1800 gold coins eventually, she could only hope that he truly was a man of his word.

“I’ll appear in their formation and cast a spell while they are still confused. Cover me a little,” Gu Fei smoothed his robe. At this moment, the Archers of Traversing Four Seas were still peppering

them with arrows, yet those did not pose any threat to the two given their fast speed. Once Svelte Dancer fully recovered her HP, the two leaped out of the trench once more.

“Translocation! Blink!” Gu Fei promptly chanted once he regained his balance. To use this defensive skill, Gu Fei had to point at the direction he wished to teleport to as he chanted. In this case, the location was the very center of the Traversing Four Seas’ archer formation.

Meanwhile, Svelte Dancer darted in front of Gu Fei and used her body and dagger to block the arrows heading their way.

Gu Fei felt the space around him distort upon completing the incantation. While the Thieves would become blurry and transparent when using Stealth or Vanish, Mages would appear as if they were torn apart when using Blink. Right now, the nearby players saw Gu Fei’s figure shatter like pieces of glass that faded into nothingness in the next moment.

When Gu Fei completed his spell chanting, a second spatial distortion also appeared at the same time at some place else on the PvP arena. Compared to how his figure cracked and disappeared into thin air at his initial location, the enemies could witness the sight of the shattered pieces of glass reforming into Gu Fei’s figure over in that location.

Translocation: Blink was truly instantaneous. Gu Fei barely blinked his eyes and the scenery before him had already changed to that of another location. He turned around to look at where he had originally been and saw that Svelte Dancer was still blocking the arrows over there. That was also when he realized one big problem: His Blink did not allow him to reach the intended location that he had pointed to moments ago.

Gu Fei was behind Svelte Dancer moments ago, and yet he was now barely five meters in front of her even after he had casted Blink – a long way off from the position he had pointed to just

then!

“Why did you blink there for?!” Svelte Dancer fumed.

“I don’t know!” Gu Fei was at a loss. He was certain that his finger had not pointed wrongly, so why was he only teleported at such a short distance?

The skill description for Blink did not mention a limitation for the distance that a player could travel; it only mentioned that the distance one could travel would be proportionate to the mana consumed. Glancing at his mana pool, he saw that it had barely been reduced. Therefore, it was definitely not an issue of insufficient mana that had caused the disparity in the distance he had traveled.

Before he could make sense of what had happened, the enemies had already launched their second volley of arrows. And this time, the arrows were fired off under the effect of Homing Projectile that traced after its enemies. Compared to the other skills, the distance covered by this skill was actually shorter, but these five meters that Gu Fei had suddenly advanced to had effectively brought him into a range where Homing Projectile could reach him.

Ever since the squad of Archers started their assault from the very beginning, Youthful Reflection had been slowly steering the Archers closer to the trench as they fired off arrows precisely because he wanted the two’s hiding place to enter Homing Projectile’s range. This way, the two targets would certainly be eliminated once their heads appeared out of the trench again. But that was no longer necessary, as Gu Fei had just kindly delivered himself to them. The Archers did not hesitate to fire off arrows on Homing Projectile at him, and dozens of arrows could be seen coming straight toward Gu Fei’s direction in the next moment.

One could not actually ‘dodge’ the arrows empowered by the Homing Projectile skill, and getting rid of these arrows was only possible by either deflecting them all or running until the skill

duration ended. For Gu Fei, of course he could deflect several of them, but he had no way of parrying all hundreds of arrows at once. Even Svelte Dancer had given up on covering for Gu Fei when she saw this scene, as she knew deep down that it was unlikely for him to escape this aerial assault. With a sigh, she chose to return into the safety of the trench.

Gu Fei desperately tried to throw out a spell at the Archers, but this attempt ended in failure as dozens of arrows lodged themselves into Gu Fei's body, eliminating him without suspense.

Just as he was sent out of the PvP arena and into the plaza by the Main Hall of Guilds, Royal God Call's message arrived: "Did you just use Blink?" Royal God Call was part of the Traversing Four Seas' archer formation and was even one of the Archers that had fired off arrows on Homing Projectile at Gu Fei. Therefore, he clearly witnessed everything that had just occurred in the skirmish.

"Yup," Gu Fei answered.

"Where did you get its skill scroll?" Royal God Call asked.

"I bought it from Svelte Dancer," Gu Fei replied.

"How much?"

"2000 gold coins."

"You're really rich!" Royal God Call exclaimed admiringly.

"I'm paying it in installment... I've only paid her 200 gold coins for now," Gu Fei admitted.

"She is rich, anyway... and given how close you two are, you should have just asked her to give it to you as a gift!" Royal God Call remarked.

"We're just friends. And being rich is no reason for one to gift people things arbitrarily," Gu Fei lectured Royal God Call.

"Tsk!" Royal God Call ignored his words.

“How is Svelte Dancer faring?” Gu Fei was busy being skewered by arrows that he did not have the time to check on Svelte Dancer’s situation.

“She nimbly hid back inside that trench,” Royal God Call informed him.

“Finish that fight quickly. Come and experiment Blink with me once you’re done,” Gu Fei said.

Gu Fei’s carelessness on relying on a new-found spell had caused him his death. With him being defeated, even just handling twenty or thirty Archers alone would be a tall order for Svelte Dancer to overcome, let alone clashing with the entire archer formation of Traversing Four Seas all by herself.

The match ended just as expected. Each of the ladies scattered all over the map was found and killed off, letting Traversing Four Seas secure an easy victory. Amethyst Rebirth was finally put down and would no longer be able to mess around in the guild versus guild tournament. Given the guild’s strength, it was already fortunate of Amethyst Rebirth to make it this far in the PvP tournament.

The ladies knew their limits well. Honestly speaking, the ladies were not really saddened by their elimination from the guild versus guild tournament as they were not that interested in it in the first place. When everyone was sent out of the PvP arena, they merely expressed a few casual remarks about losing the match before putting the entire matter behind and leaving cheerfully to do their businesses.

In the end, Svelte Dancer seemed to be the only one that was truly saddened by losing the match. She had been busying herself by participating in the mercenary and guild tournaments, but with the elimination of her mercenary group and guild, she was suddenly left without a purpose and was currently feeling very depressed.

As for Gu Fei, he was also feeling very despondent over losing such a viable reason to slay people with no consequences. He and Svelte Dancer shared a moment of depression until Royal God Call squeezed his way out of Traversing Four Seas and found the two of them sitting at the corner of a wall.

Royal God Call temporarily abandoned his passion for magic when he saw the beautiful Svelte Dancer. Cheerfully greeting her, his eyes barely registered Gu Fei's existence.

Svelte Dancer was currently in a bad mood. She easily surmised that Royal God Call was part of the enemy camp's annoying archer formation upon seeing him here and knowing his job class, so Svelte Dancer barely greeted him. Singing a sorrowful song, she swiftly left.

"Ah... Her voice is so melodious," Royal God Call said as he watched her walk away.

"Grape!" Gu Fei called out.

"Ah!" Royal God Call quickly turned around with a solemn expression on his face, yet he found not even a trace of Grape.

Gu Fei sobbed in his heart. Royal God Call was truly the type of man who lusted for every lady. Compared to Sakurazaka Moony, Royal God Call was actually more reprehensible.

Royal God Call realized that Gu Fei had just been teasing him when he saw no traces of Grape. He felt slightly embarrassed inside, so he hurriedly changed the subject and engaged Gu Fei in a discussion about the Translocation: Blink spell. Royal God Call asked Gu Fei to explain in greater detail his status at that time of using the spell – chanting speed, finger and eyes' direction, etc.

Gu Fei was dumbfounded when Royal God Call began a lengthy tirade about ten possible reasons for being teleported by the skill short of the intended location. At the end of his speech, Royal God Call casually asked, "So which among these do you think is the

reason behind it?”

“I think it’s because I just learned the skill. My low proficiency in it prevented me from being teleported far,” Gu Fei felt quite ashamed of his rudimentary gaming knowledge.

“Oh... That – That’s probably a reason, too,” Royal God Call was actually feeling more ashamed than Gu Fei inside for not considering that possibility.

Chapter 190 - End of the Fifth Round

The advanced skill, Blink, that Gu Fei had recently purchased at a cheap price left him quite disappointed during his first use of it.

Experimenting with it afterward, Gu Fei learned that the distance he could blink at most was over five meters. He also learned that he could freely choose how much mana to put into it. This was easy to do, as it was just a matter of adjusting the amount of data being transferred.

The mana consumption for the skill would increase by a fold every half a meter traveled from the caster's original position. Moreover, the skill's cool-down time was long, needing at least a full minute.

Mage spells with long cool-down time like this were actually rare. The Blink skill's long cool-down time meant that it could not be frequently casted and that it would take much longer to increase its proficiency. After all, he could only use it once every minute!

While the description for Blink did not mention just how far the spell could transport a caster with maximum proficiency, it was evident that Gu Fei would need to train for a long time just to be able to cover the kind of distance that he had intended to teleport to earlier in the PvP match with Traversing Four Seas.

“Hone your proficiency patiently! And try to use Blink every minute from here onward. Fully incorporate this skill into your very bones. The time needed might be quite long, but—”

“Alright, I get it!” Gu Fei interrupted Royal God Call. He was someone who had diligently spent twenty years training kung fu. Did he really need a brat like Royal God Call to teach him about ‘patience’?

After separating from Royal God Call, Gu Fei began to familiarize himself with how to use Blink properly. Later on, he logged off.

Meanwhile, Ye Xiaowu, who had accidentally steered Gu Fei toward a brighter path this morning by convincing the latter to become a Lightning Mage, was feeling exceptionally anxious. Came night, he decisively forwent sleep and ran off toward the monitoring team by the Game Administration Department. As Parallel World was operational twenty-four seven, the members of the monitoring team also worked in a twenty-four-hour shift. Since Ye Xiaowu was not part of this department, his sudden appearance in the dead of night momentarily frightened the monitoring team.

Ye Xiaowu had been busy recently, so a few days had passed since he last took note of Gu Fei's character data. But after a little 'prep-talk' about Job Class Advancement for Mages when they met each other by chance this morning, he had somehow managed to convince the latter to advance into the path of a Lightning Mage. So here he was right now, appearing at where the monitoring team was in the dead of night. Quickly pulling out Gu Fei's data sheet, he almost spat out blood when he saw its content.

The Blink skill had already appeared in Gu Fei's spell arsenal.

"Where... Where did this come from?" Ye Xiaowu asked the monitoring team as he pointed at Gu Fei's newest spell.

"This..." A member of the team came forward and carefully examined it, "For him to learn Blink now, it must be from a permanent skill scroll!"

Ye Xiaowu rolled his eyes as he was naturally aware of that. He then mumbled to himself, "How did he get the scroll for it? I have only mentioned it this morning, and he has gotten one in less than a day!? This seems too much of a coincidence!"

None of the members of the monitoring team answered him. The questions were too detailed, and to find out exactly how Gu Fei acquired a permanent skill scroll would require thorough checking of the matter. For the monitoring team, what mattered was that

nothing seemed strange based on the data presented. Ever since Parallel World became operational until now, their anti-hacking and anti-loophole programs had relatively been successful.

Ye Xiaowu finally snapped back to reality from his mumbling. He was about to address the team when he saw that the members had already returned to their cubicles to do their work.

“Hey—”

“Ah! Chief Ye, you’re no stranger to everything around here, so just help yourself with whatever you need! We really don’t mind.” A member of the team interrupted him. All of the staff proceeded to bury their heads into their work, carefully not making eye contact with Ye Xiaowu.

Ye Xiaowu could only grit his teeth at this and tackle the matter himself.

Fortunately, Gu Fei had just learned the skill for less than a day, so it did not take long for Ye Xiaowu to find out how the latter had exactly come across the skill scroll: He had obtained it from a player called Svelte Dancer. Ye Xiaowu felt helpless upon learning this. As a senior game employee, he was at least aware of some of the more experienced players in the online gaming community. Svelte Dancer had the reputation of being the wealthiest pay-to-win gamer out there, so it was hardly surprising for her to possess such an item.

On another matter, the mercenary PvP tournament and the guild versus guild tournament had respectively reached the end of the fifth round. With the single-elimination format, each in-game city was now left with just 3% to 5% of the participating guilds and mercenary groups. Many famous and a few inconspicuous guilds and mercenary groups made it this far.

Over in Yunduan City, Amethyst Rebirth was originally the darkest of all the dark horses. After beating the two big guilds Carouse and Cloud Herder, all were hoping for it to create another

miracle by beating Traversing Four Seas as well. In the end, Yunduan City's number one guild still seized victory. From this, many people already considered Traversing Four Seas as worthy of its reputation. There should not be any unexpected outcome for Yunduan City's guild versus guild tournament as long as Traversing Four Seas kept performing well.

Not many players and organizations took note of the mercenary PvP tournament compared to the guild versus guild tournament. After the fifth round of it, only two groups caught everyone's attention for clinching victory despite being the underdogs.

The first was naturally Young Master's Elite. Very few people would know about it if one mentioned Young Master's Elite in Yunduan City, but everyone would promptly know of the group if someone mentioned the Grand Kiting mercenary group. After all, the six-man mercenary group was the first to use the Grand Kiting strategy to eliminate the level 4 Cloud Herder mercenary group. Besides that one match, Young Master's Elite had yet to meet another formidable opponent.

The other mercenary group that had received quite a lot of attention was Silver Moon's, whom Gu Fei found contemptuous. Silver Moon mercenary group was newly established in Yunduan City. This mercenary group was only at level 2 with forty members, yet it had eliminated two level 4 mercenary groups with up to eighty members each. According to the defeated mercenary groups' description, Silver Moon mercenary group had many Warriors and a few Knights and Priests. The Charge attack that this group had used was unusually domineering and easily demolished their opponents with one fatal rush.

Besides these two surprising entrants, the other well-known groups, The Black Hand, Traversing Four Seas, and Water Flower (which belonged to the Carouse Guild), had also safely made it to the sixth round of the mercenary PvP tournament.

The next day, Royal God Call and War Without Wounds had a

rarely seen somber expression on their faces during their meeting at Ray's Bar before today's match. Furthermore, Brother Assist immediately began his briefing once Gu Fei sat down on his seat.

"Today, we are matched up against Silver Moon mercenary group," This statement was actually meant for Gu Fei, as the other five would at least take note of which group Young Master's Elite was matched up against for the next day when they got offline.

"Oh. To actually be paired up against them..." Gu Fei said and a sudden swishing sound was heard. He then disappeared from thin air before reappearing next to Brother Assist.

In his shock, Brother Assist accidentally bumped a glass of liquor off the table. The usually languorous Young Master Han suddenly became very nimble as he quickly reached out to grab the tipped over glass. Since he was just a Priest with Agility stat limitation, he only caught the glass when almost half of its content had spilled. Young Master Han incessantly sighed as he stared at the spilled alcohol on the couch, seemingly out of touch with the world. As for everyone else, they were busy gawking at Gu Fei.

The moment soon past and everyone came back to their senses. Royal God Call proudly declared, "See how awesome Blink is!" as if he was the one that had the skill.

His misplaced pride made everyone feel disgruntled. War Without Wounds picked Royal God Call up and tossed him out. His scream reverberated inside the room as he flew outside of it. Ray's head carefully poked through the curtain and said, "You knocked into two tables."

"Whoever knocked it shall foot the bill," War Without Wounds replied calmly.

"Shameless! I wanna have a deathmatch with you!" Royal God Call angrily exclaimed as he rushed into the room.

War Without Wounds casually swept his gaze over and agreed,

“Alright. Let’s do it right here!”

Royal God Call was momentarily taken aback by this. This room’s tight space made it impossible for Archers like himself to properly demonstrate their forte. He simply had no way of taking a Warrior head on right here. Thinking that War Without Wounds would not be foolish enough to head outside and allow Royal God Call to kite him, the latter could only glumly sit down once more.

“Where did you get that skill scroll?” the rest began to ask Gu Fei.

Gu Fei explained the whole incident once more and everyone reacted differently.

War Without Wounds reacted exactly like how Royal God Call had: He showed a lovestruck look on his face since there was a lady involved in the matter.

Sword Demon and Young Master Han sighed in awe, “How nice is it to be rich.”

Brother Assist inquired further about the whole matter, “She’s a Thief, so why would she have a skill scroll for Blink?”

When Gu Fei told him the reason, Brother Assist stood up and solemnly addressed the crowd, “From this matter, everyone can clearly see how important information gathering is. I propose we increase the point reward for this particular task to 15 points, instead.”

“Brother Assist, your drink’s empty. Would you like another glass?” Young Master Han asked.

Brother Assist did not respond and just quietly sat back down.

“Continue with the briefing for our opponent of the day, please,” Sword Demon said.

“Nothing much to say about today,” Brother Assist sighed as he opened his mouth once more, “Everyone has already come into contact with Silver Moon back in Yueye City. The skill he

possesses, which affects an entire party, will be exceptionally strong in a mercenary group that is mainly composed of Warriors.”

“Oh. That guy is pretty smart. He knows that his skill is much more suited in the mercenary PvP tournament than in the guild versus guild tournament. Unlike the guild matches where there may be hundreds of participants, the current highest level of a mercenary group is only level 5, with a maximum of just one hundred men in a group.” Young Master Han said.

“Brother Assist, this means that you won’t be earning any points for your information collection today,” Sword Demon said.

“Ah? Oi, Sword Demon! Don’t be so serious!” Brother Assist hurriedly coaxed.

“Then, can you provide us with any other information we are not aware of?” Sword Demon asked.

“Erm... Silver Moon mercenary group has forty members.”

All rolled their eyes.

“It mostly has Warriors.”

Another eye roll.

“Furthermore—”

A swishing sound was heard as Gu Fei disappeared from beside Brother Assist and appeared right next to Sword Demon. Brother Assist jumped, forgetting what he had been wanting to say as he and the others stared fixedly at Gu Fei.

“Stop showing off!” Young Master Han said as he quaffed his liquor.

“I’m training my proficiency of the skill,” Gu Fei responded seriously.

Chapter 191 - Silver Moon Mercenary Group

Not much could be said about the Silver Moon mercenary group besides the fact that its leader, Silver Moon, possessed the skill to buff the stats of everyone in his team within a short timeframe.

Brother Assist confidently proclaimed to his fellow mercenaries that he would be able to appraise Silver Moon and find out his equipment's characteristics in today's match. "How many points will I earn if I can find that out?" Brother Assist asked Sword Demon.

"You want points for that?" Sword Demon expressed his surprise, before realizing that it was indeed quite difficult for Brother Assist to earn contribution points. He technically had the weakest job class as a Knight out of everyone in the group, and given their capabilities, Sword Demon, Royal God Call, and the rest had no need for his blessing to fight the average players. In fact, a Priest was also unnecessary to them. Thankfully, Brother Assist was not shameless enough to give himself points for his good looks and talent like Young Master Han. His request was not out of shamelessness as well, so Sword Demon easily agreed to it, "I'll award you 1 point for it!" This made Brother Assist feel satisfied.

Gu Fei popped beside Sword Demon with a swish, "So how many points will I get for slaying Silver Moon?"

"That... would depend on the timing, the setting, and the judgment that can impact the entire course of the PvP. You see..." Sword Demon began breaking everything down to the smallest detail. Young Master Han sympathetically gazed at Gu Fei, as if saying, "You've asked a question you shouldn't have asked."

Gu Fei was truly in a lot of pain because Sword Demon was using plenty of gaming jargons in his explanation, so he hurriedly teleported himself over to the other side of the room once one minute was up.

Young Master Han stood up, “I’m taking my leave first. I’ll meet you guys inside the ‘changing room’.”

Everyone was baffled. Ever since this room at Ray’s Bar became Young Master’s Elite’s unofficial meeting place, Young Master Han would spend the most time in this room and would exit it last out of everyone. Even when he had something on, he would still drag their meeting out. It was as if he could not survive each day without drinking as much as he could. And yet, this drinking addict was actually the first one to excuse himself today.

Why was it so different today? Everyone stared at him in astonishment.

Young Master Han glanced at Gu Fei sideways, “I’ll throw up if I see Miles teleport about one more time.” He then lifted a glass of liquor and left the room.

“Do we need to cover our faces for this match against Silver Moon?” Brother Assist suddenly asked.

“We indeed have to take the necessary precautions against that shameless man. I of course am not afraid of him and am just worried for you guys,” Gu Fei replied matter-of-factly.

All the individuals present in the room felt that Gu Fei was trampling on their dignity as gaming experts, so they each expressed their willingness to engage in a deathmatch in broad daylight.

When this episode ended, Brother Assist asked him, “From your tone, you seem to be harboring some sort of resentment toward Silver Moon. If my memory serves me right, it’s you who slew him to clear off your PK points before clashing with his guild and subsequently attracting the attention of everyone in Yueye City. It was highly likely that he would still be having a great time in Yueye City without your meddling. Based on this, he should be the one holding a deep grudge toward you, so why does it seem to go both ways now?”

“Do I seem to resent or hate him? I just can’t stand that guy’s personality, that’s all,” Gu Fei waved his hand dismissively.

“What about his personality?” the men asked.

Realizing his fellow mercenaries’ obliviousness to Silver Moon’s bad deed inside Yunduan City’s underground prison, he hurriedly told them about it. As expected, War Without Wounds and Royal God Call leaped to their feet once Gu Fei was done speaking.

War Without Wounds slapped the table, “That guy’s too much! Poor Vast Lushness... Where is she now? After going through all that, I bet she must be yearning for a broad chested man to comfort her wounded soul at the moment....”

“Are you perhaps talking about yourself?” Gu Fei gave him a sideways glance.

“I wouldn’t mind offering my chest to her if that’s what she needs,” War Without Wounds shamelessly replied.

As for Royal God Call, he was currently waging an intense battle inside him. The issue here was that he already had Grape in his heart. While Vast Lushness was prettier, Grape had actually shown interest toward him before, so he felt that it would be a waste to let go just like that. It’s so hard to choose! Royal God Call sighed to himself as he gulped down the drink before him. His unrestrained drinking style left everyone in a daze, and at first glance, it was as if Young Master Han had somehow ended up possessing the body of Royal God Call.

“The online gaming community is becoming more and more polluted. In fact, shameless people now outnumber the humble players,” Sword Demon commented emphatically.

“I strongly agree,” Gu Fei concurred as he moved to another part of the room with a swish.

“Ugh... I feel like puking... Turns out that seeing you use Blink when drunk really causes dizziness and nausea... No, no, no! I’ll

take my leave now, too,” Royal God Call dizzily stood up.

“It’s about time, so let’s just leave together,” Brother Assist said after looking at the time.

Thus, everyone in the room stood up and headed outside. Lifting the curtain and stepping outside for not more than a few steps, the five met someone familiar who was also leaving the bar. When Gu Fei and that person’s eyes met, he froze up while the latter warmly rushed over to greet him, “Oh, Miles bro! How coincidental for us to meet each other here!”

“How coincidental, indeed.” Seeing how warmly the man greeted him, Gu Fei was forced to toss this amiable reply back.

Brother Assist and the others froze up. This was because the man before them was none other than Silver Moon. Gu Fei was just expressing his disdain for the man moments ago, so why was Silver Moon greeting him so warmly right now? He even knew his name... Just what sort of encounter did these two have?

The thing was that Gu Fei had omitted some parts of the whole story in order to keep things short, so the other five was only made aware of the part where Silver Moon had despicably put all the blame on Vast Lushness and abandoned her to the enemies. The part about how they had briefly bonded through a gambling session inside the prison was skipped entirely by Gu Fei.

After exchanging formal greetings, Silver Moon’s gaze swept over the other members of Young Master’s Elite and asked, “Are these your companions? Are you guys participating in the mercenary PvP tournament as well?”

Gu Fei cheerfully nodded his head, “Yes. In fact, we ‘coincidentally’ have you as our opponent for this round.”

His words caused Silver Moon to be momentarily stunned, “Everyone here is from Young Master’s Elite? The group that won against a higher number of enemies through ‘Grand Kiting’?”

“That’s us,” Gu Fei confirmed.

“But... There should be six of you, right?” Silver Moon did a headcount of them.

“Mhm-mhm! Our idiotic leader has left first,” Gu Fei replied.

This ‘idiotic leader’ nickname seemed to have won the approval of Royal God Call and the rest, as they vigorously nodded their heads at Gu Fei’s words.

“Oh. I suppose our next meeting will be inside the PvP arena!” Silver Moon extended his hand toward Gu Fei.

“See you there,” Gu Fei said but did not proffer his hand.

Silver Moon’s expression became somewhat stiff, yet he managed to maintain the smile on his lips, “I’ll be taking my leave first, then.” He then retracted his hand and left the bar with his companions.

“How do you guys know each other?” Brother Assist questioned Gu Fei on their way to the Hall of Mercenaries. Gu Fei had been wearing a disguise in Yueye City, so any locals of that city would not have known his identity as 27149.

Gu Fei could only share the whole incident inside the prison to them.

“That means that he doesn’t know that you’re 27149, right?” Brother Assist asked.

“Originally, he didn’t. But if he has any brains at all, he should be able to connect the dots by now,” Gu Fei answered.

Sword Demon nodded his head, “I’ve met him before. We’ve even exchanged blows with each other. He should be able to recognize me at the very least.”

“I’ve shot an arrow at him, too,” Royal God Call raised his hand.

“That’s a good boy,” Gu Fei patted his head.

“Scram!” Royal God Call raised his hand to strike Gu Fei, yet the latter had already moved to a new spot with a swish.

Arriving by the Hall of Mercenaries, the five quickly entered the teleportation array to head toward the ‘changing room’, but Young Master Han was nowhere to be seen inside.

“That guy is not gonna bail out from the match, right?” some of them wondered aloud. Just as they were about to send Young Master Han a message with only five minutes left of the waiting time, a flash of white light produced the person in question. Two bottles of liquor were in his hands.

Young Master Han promptly checked the opposing side’s PvP participants upon entering the ‘changing room’, “Aye! There are only ten of them!” He exclaimed.

“Seems like they are wary of our Grand Kiting strategy, which may be the reason why there are so few of them,” Brother Assist offered his opinion.

“Avoiding the enemies; dragging out the time; causing the huge number of enemies to hesitate on attacking in case they end up hitting their own comrades. These are what defines Grand Kiting. Silver Moon’s fighting style, meanwhile, emphasizes on boosting his teammates to clash with the others head on, so of course they would be wary of our Grand Kiting strategy. Even if Silver Moon could correctly deduce that ‘Grand Kiting’ is actually a ruse to fool the others into fighting us with only a small number of people, he would still have no choice but to do just that,” Young Master Han said.

“Why is that?”

“Well, if I am to be honest, his method of buffing all his teammates to take out the enemies is actually more suited as a surprise attack that he should only execute once or twice. But since he has been relying on that one tactic for all his matches, every player in Parallel World must be aware of his army of men clad in

golden light by now. Only an idiot would face them head on, so of course he would be changing his tactic this time by fighting us with only ten of them,” Young Master Han said.

“According to my sources, all the mercenary groups he has fought thus far were defeated by him because they’ve faced him head on,” Brother Assist said.

“That just means that those groups are all idiots,” Young Master Han did not dress his remark.

His statement was so arrogant, that the others were left speechless.

“The Grand Kiting strategy is also a kind of surprise attack that we should only use if there is a need for it, since repeated usage will only cause the others to develop a counter for it in advance. Silver Moon must be aware of this, yet he chose to play along, pretending that he is afraid of us by sending only a total of ten people for our upcoming match. It may seem like he is wary of our Grand Kiting strategy, but it’s all mind games on his part, and he is actually trying to goad us into fighting him head on. I think this must be how his group managed to defeated their past foes with the same tactic every time... By purposefully flaunting some kind of weakness to those foes, he managed to dupe them into thinking that it was okay to face his group head on, ignoring the fact that he possesses an insane skill that could boost the capabilities of his entire group.” Young Master Han said.

“So what you’re saying is that Silver Moon already knows your intention, but he still pretends to fall for the trick in order for us to fight them head on?” Some were left reeling with all the deceptions going on in this one match.

“That’s correct,” Young Master Han nodded his head.

“Erm... I have something to say,” Sword Demon usually did not speak much, so everyone promptly shifted their gazes on him. Sword Demon, for his part, only looked at Young Master Han,

“Aren’t you just thinking too much? You’ve also given the matter so much thought last time in Yueye City, but it turned out that Silver Moon’s thinking wasn’t as convoluted as that. Can you perhaps think this through with simplicity?”

“What’s there to think about? Let’s just directly kill them all! It’s only ten men,” Gu Fei grumbled.

“See? That’s how people typically fall for their tricks,” Young Master Han pointed at Gu Fei.

“That’s different,” Sword Demon shook his head, “Because Miles truly has the ability to slay them all.”

Chapter 192 - Guardians

“Miles, even you couldn’t insta-kill Silver Moon back then, right?” These mercenaries vividly recalled their adventure in Yueye City, as it was their grandest affair in Parallel World thus far.

Gu Fei nodded his head, “Yup. I couldn’t.”

“So what do we do to prevent him from unleashing that powerful skill this time?” Royal God Call asked.

Gu Fei glanced at him, “We’ll just have to slash him a second time.”

Royal God Call had no words for his simplistic answer.

The system’s ten-second countdown ended, and the teleportation array began to glow in white light, enveloping all those who stood within and transporting them to their respective PvP arenas. There were only a total of sixteen players participating in the match between Young Master’s Elite mercenary group and Silver Moon mercenary group, so the map that they were given was relatively small.

“Let’s head toward a vantage point and scope out the situation.” Young Master Han employed his usual PvP maneuver.

As they climbed up a small hill near their group’s spawn point, they saw a few figures also heading up a hill on the other side of the map.

“How many men are there?” Young Master Han pointed the opposite hill with his liquor bottle to Royal God Call.

Royal God Call placed a hand to his forehead and peered, “Exactly ten men.” He then shouted to Sword Demon, “Points, please!”

Gu Fei found this quite strange. He could barely make out the people on the other hill from his position, and his eyesight had

been pretty good since young. Was it possible that Royal God Call had better eyesight than him?

Inquiring about the matter, Gu Fei was told that Royal God Call could now use the level 40 passive skill, Eagle Eye, after the latter had advanced to a Sharpshooter. The skill allowed its user to possess eyesight on par with that of an eagle, so it was pretty popular to myopic Archers. Ever since they got Eagle Eye, their myopia became a thing of the past and they could even see objects from afar in-game. These myopic Archers with low self-esteem issues could now stand tall and walk proudly as they gazed on the horizon.

“Royal, keep your eyes on them. Observe their movement for us,” Young Master Han said.

Royal God Call voiced his assent as he proudly monitored the enemies from afar.

While waiting for the enemies to make a move, all of them were doing something on their own to ease the boredom. Royal God Call continued to strain his eyes to observe the movement of the enemies until he became teary eyed; Young Master Han opened a new bottle of liquor and threw it on the ground once he chugged it all down; Gu Fei managed to perform up to the fifth set of moves of a swordplay while he waited; War Without Wounds privately chatted up the eighth lady on his friends list; and Sword Demon and Brother Assist were meticulously discussing the things listed in the scoring booklet... Even after all that, the enemies had hardly made any movement atop the opposite hill.

Young Master Han put a hand inside his dimensional pocket to get another bottle of liquor, only to discover that he was out of it. He promptly stood up and cursed, “This sucks!” As everyone turned to look at him, he exclaimed indignantly, “Is this how they actually forced all their past opponents to engage them directly? By turning everyone restless through the long wait?!”

Everyone thought that sentiment made sense. With both sides fighting, surely one group would have to initiate the assault if the other group chose to not make a move.

“If both sides choose not to fight, what will be the system’s decision?” Royal God Call asked Brother Assist.

“Overtime will occur, and it will continue on until one side gains a point,” Brother Assist replied.

“Most players who participate in the mercenary PvP tournament usually have the guild versus guild tournament to participate into afterward. These guys seem to be taking advantage of that fact to force their previous opponents into attacking them first. Once their opponents realized that they were running late for the next match, they would of course take the initiative to attack, and this would of course lead to a head-on clash in the end,” Young Master Han broke down the matter at hand.

“Are you perhaps overthinking things again?” Sword Demon did not even lift his head from the booklet.

“Definitely overthinking,” Royal God Call nodded his head, “They have made a move.”

“Oh?” All stopped whatever they were doing to gaze once more on that distant hill.

When they saw no movement from the opposite hill, they instead focused their eyes on Royal God Call, who heaved a long sigh, “Looks like they got bored just like us after sitting for so long, so they stretched their bodies for a bit....”

Everyone became quiet for a moment. “Let’s just go to them!” These experts had long lost interest on passing the time by doing random stuff and decided to head straight to Silver Moon to conclude this match.

“Charge!” Young Master Han raised his hand.

“Seriously?” Everyone had actually thought that he would calmly

weigh the odds and analyze their current situation.

“I’m outta booze,” Young Master Han explained. “Let’s end this quick so I can go buy some more.”

“You drinking addict!” The others exclaimed as they descended the hill and headed to the opposite side of the map. Royal God Call continued to keep an eye on the enemies along the way, but the opposite side still seemed to be doing nothing.

“Stop!” Young Master Han ordered when they were halfway there.

“What?” they asked.

“Miles, Royal, Sword Demon, get close to the enemies. Wounds, Assist, stay with me to bring up the rear,” Young Master Han said.

“What do you mean?” They all could not fathom Young Master Han’s thoughts, especially Royal God Call who was afraid of being sent on a suicide mission again.

“Once Silver Moon uses his skill, his party’s speed will likely increase. If things pan out that way, the three of us with slow movement speed will find it hard to get away,” Young Master Han explained.

Thus, the six acted according to Young Master Han’s orders. Young Master Han, War Without Wounds, and Brother Assist found somewhere to observe from afar, while Gu Fei, Royal God Call, and Sword Demon proceeded forward to close in on the enemies.

Even when they reached the foot of the hill, the ten men on top of it still remained motionless. Royal God Call suddenly exclaimed, “Eagle Eye is so cool! I can even see the inside of their noses. Can you guys do the same?” Royal God Call boasted to Sword Demon and Gu Fei.

“Shoot an arrow and see how they’ll react.” The enemies were still not making any movement despite them already entering the

Archer Royal God Call's attack range. Royal God Call nocked an arrow and drew his bowstring, readying himself to fire off an arrow.

That was when the ten men finally made a move. They suddenly gathered together and the three Warriors standing in front each took out a large shield that they held before them. The three men hunched their backs, and the entire Silver Moon mercenary group became protected by the shields.

“Those are Guardians...” Sword Demon said.

Guardian was the other job class that a Warrior could advance into, and choosing this route would grant a Warrior high HP and defense. At level 40, a Guardian could learn a new passive skill called Defense Mastery. This skill not only increased the player's HP but also provided extra defense through the Shield Mastery skill.

Shields were also considered as weapons in Parallel World. While the Attack Power they provided was really low, they had the highest defensive properties. And even if the other job classes tried using shields as weapons, they would still have to fulfill the required Shield Aptitude before they could obtain the maximum defense provided by shields. When it came to the ability to fully utilize the prowess of a shield, Guardians from level 40 onward were the only ones capable of doing it through the Aptitude boost provided by their passive Defense Mastery skill.

Royal God Call fired off his arrow at this point, and it pierced through the air with the same force he had always been employing in his attacks. A loud clink was heard when the arrow made contact with the surface of a shield.

The arrow did not even move the shield an inch and just feebly dropped to the ground upon contact.

When Young Master Han saw this scene unfold from a distance, a slight smile formed on his lips, “Guardians... so that's how it is. I

have a hunch that they would have a method to prevent Archers from shooting them down from afar, and we have just found out exactly how it is possible! If that's case, we can only send a Mage forward." While Young Master Han was mumbling this, Gu Fei and his two companions were still trying various ways to attack their opponents.

Royal God Call swiftly headed to the other side of the hill to sneak in an attack on the enemies' flank. The ten men seemed to have included this into their estimation, as they immediately adjusted their position in accordance to Royal God Call's movement. No matter how fast his movement speed was, he would never be faster than people turning their bodies around. Royal God Call continued to see the three large shields no matter where he positioned himself, not even seeing a strand of stray hair.

"You're only wasting your time," Young Master Han snorted upon seeing Royal God Call's action.

Royal God Call grew depressed at having wasted his effort. Returning to Gu Fei's side, he patted him on the shoulder, "It's your turn now."

"You're done? Can't you do a volley shot like yesterday?" Gu Fei gestured with his hand and drew a curved line in the air. He and Svelte Dancer had personally experienced being peppered by the Archers volley of arrows during yesterday's match with Traversing Four Seas, and he was certain that Royal God Call had shot out quite a few arrows like that as well.

"Well... None of my current skills can cover that kind of range, so firing an arrow like that is only possible through basic attacks. And I can't do much damage to a Warrior by just firing a regular arrow. Besides, that kind of aerial assault is only effective when there are tons of Archers together like yesterday. Since I'm the only Archer here right now, that method can't be used to deal with them," Royal God Call explained himself.

“Just watch me, then!” Gu Fei took out his sword. Dashing a few steps forward, the three Warriors quickly entered his spell-casting range, “Descending Wheel of Flames! Descend!”

When the enemy Warriors heard Gu Fei’s command, they immediately raised the shields over their heads.

Gu Fei and gang were shocked.

“What are they doing?! Shields only have physical defense. There’s no way they can block a magic attack!” Sword Demon exclaimed, stunned.

Following Sword Demon’s exclamation, Gu Fei’s flame wheel ignited in the air and began its descent. The three watched this happen in real time. Just as the spell was about to land on the raised shields, a transparent glimmer shone on the surface of the shields and the flame wheel was easily extinguished. Despite the ten men under the shields remaining still, their expression showed surprise. Evidently, Gu Fei’s high Spell Damage had still managed to injure some of them.

“They’re not dead? Do their shields have magic defense?” The faraway Young Master Han expressed his surprise.

“That’s a new piece of vital information; I’ll head over to appraise those shields,” Brother Assist was about to make his way over after saying this, but Young Master Han pulled him back, “No, leave that to Sword Demon.”

“Equipment that has physical defense as well as magic defense is extremely rare. How frightening that these two traits could actually be found on shields... Shields are the equipment that possesses the highest amount of defense, after all,” Brother Assist began his analysis on those shields of their enemies.

“So this is the real reason why there are only ten of them!” Young Master Han realized, “I previously thought that since their tactic relies on direct and frontal assault, wouldn’t it be more effective

for them to overcome us through numerical superiority by employing all forty members to camp atop that hill and wait for us to arrive? To think that it's actually because of this other trump card that they have. They should have only three of those shields, and they can only cover ten players at most. Archers and Mages won't be able to cause significant damage as long as those three Guardians are around. At this rate, we will surely be forced to engage them in close combat!"

"Well, if Miles and Royal perform their attacks from two different directions at the same time, those three Guardians will probably be forced into choosing just one side to defend against, leaving them defenseless on the other direction." Just as Brother Assist was saying this, Gu Fei and Royal God Call had already proceeded to employ it.

The former let loose a spell while the latter fired off an arrow.

In the end, Royal God Call was left in tears. This was because the enemies had disregarded his arrow and chose to focus solely on defending against Gu Fei's spell. Royal God Call's pride as an expert was trampled on once more.

"No point in competing like this. You'll only frustrate yourself over your own incompetence," Sword Demon consoled him.

Chapter 193 - Improvisation

Gu Fei's Magic Attack Power was terrifyingly high and it could insta-kill many people. In fact, any job class with low HP would have no way of surviving his spells. Right now, however, he was facing three Guardians that had allocated most of their points toward Endurance and were holding three shields with high magic defense. Given all these, it was not surprising for Gu Fei to be unable to insta-kill the three.

As for the other seven players that were also hiding behind the shields, they were essentially unaffected by Gu Fei's spell. This was because the system had merely calculated the damage dealt toward the ones' holding the shields when Descending Wheel of Flames had landed on the enemies.

At this moment, Sword Demon finished appraising the three Guardians holding the shields. "What the..." Sword Demon lost a bit of his calm demeanor and read the traits aloud, "Bulwark of Imprisonment. Absorbs 50% of Physical Damage as well as Spell Damage. Boosts both physical and magic defense by another 30%. Adds 20 points to Endurance. Holy... And they have three of those?!"

"Don't forget; that's just the boost from the shields. If we add in the defense they receive from their other equipment, their defensive ability is basically off the charts! Any kinds of attacks would just be child's play to them!" Royal God Call's face lost its color as he said this. Adding all the equipment the three men had on them, even the strongest skill, Snipe, in Royal God Call's arsenal would barely put a scratch on them.

"I may still be of use... I can probably avoid their shields and attack them from behind by using Backstab and Bludgeon," Sword Demon grimaced. However, the thing was that all ten enemies were closely packed together, and the remaining seven would of course be standing close behind the three Guardians, so how would

Sword Demon find the opportunity to actually ambush those Guardians from behind?

“Looks like it’s up to me,” Gu Fei took a few steps forward and raised his sword, “Blazing Tree of a Thousand Inferno! Arise!”

Gu Fei had sadly not allocated any points to Spirit or Intelligence, so his spells could not be casted out instantly and needed a brief moment to actually take effect. That brief moment was enough for the opponents to prepare for his upcoming spell attack, as any skilled player could tell where a spell would be casted by just looking at the where a Mage was pointing at. Gu Fei’s chanting was also rather loud, not hiding the fact that he was casting a spell at them. It was as if he was trying to see just how his opponents would react.

If I cast a Descending Wheel of Flames, they will definitely raise their shields upward to defend against it. But a spell that emerges from the ground can surely inflict damage on them, right? What else could they do? Lay those shields down and step on them?

Who knew that the enemies would do exactly that? The three Guardians deftly lay their Bulwark of Imprisonment down on the ground and the other seven men hopped on the shields. By the time the flames of Gu Fei’s spell finally sprouted from the ground and spread around, the ten men were already comfortably standing on the shields.

“They can even do that?!” Gu Fei was in tears.

“Your spell-casting time is really...” Sword Demon and Royal God Call were at a loss for words. Actually, the opponents’ approach would not have worked had they met a different Mage with quick casting time. Dispersing among themselves, making enough room to put the three large shields on the ground, and hopping on to the shields. These methodical steps of theirs needed time, and it was only due to Gu Fei’s slow casting time that they could pull all those off before the flames rose from the ground.

“Wait. Let me try casting two spells on them at once,” Gu Fei told the two as he fished out an apple to munch on. Casting four high-mana-consuming AOE spells was Gu Fei’s current limit, and he had already cast three AOE spells ever since this match started.

“No need.” Sword Demon said, “Given how easy it is to avoid your spells with your slow casting speed, I’m certain they’ve only done that to see how high your Spell Damage is.”

It was exactly as what Sword Demon had said. A small gap appeared between the two shields just as the three Guardians once more placed their shields before them. Silver Moon emerged from that gap and spoke, “Miles bro, your Spell Damage is indeed terrifying!”

Gu Fei eked out a smile. He was currently eating an apple, so he could not reply to him.

“Are your three other companions not coming over?” Silver Moon’s eyes rested on Young Master Han, Brother Assist, and War Without Wounds that were standing at a distance.

Gu Fei was still munching on his apple, so he did not respond to him. This resulted into Royal God Call interjecting, “Is there a need to send our full force just to deal with you guys?”

As Sword Demon and Gu Fei glared at him fiercely, Royal God Call feebly explained, “Those are just words people use to set the stage....”

“Royal, what you just said really resonated with me!” Gu Fei finally finished munching on the apple he had in his hand and said this, “There’s indeed no need to send everyone; just me will do.”

Sword Demon’s fierce glare shifted from Royal God Call to Gu Fei. In his mind, ‘Miles’ was not someone who would act recklessly or foolishly like this. Just the three Guardians were already hard to handle, and Silver Moon had not even activated his skill yet, so Sword Demon was thinking that they should not be taking this

ten-man group too lightly.

Royal God Call was now glaring at Gu Fei as well, with his mouth opening wide agape, “What are you trying to do?”

“Let’s move a bit closer to them.” Gu Fei was about to step forward when Sword Demon held him back and said, “Are you intending to blink into their formation? That’s useless, since you can’t insta-kill them. You won’t be able to display your ability no matter how skilled you are if they gang up and squeeze you in!”

It was a realistic problem that arose during PvP due to Parallel World being a full-immersion game. Therefore, having the ability to insta-kill opponents was a necessity if anyone wished to fight with many in-game. If a person was unable to take lives with his or her every strike, then the opponents would just bear the damage inflicted on them and squeeze him or her in. How could the person fight if he or she could not even extend an arm and or a leg? This was the strategy that Foe-herder had hesitated to use against Gu Fei during their skirmish to prove the latter’s identity as the sole male Mage in Amethyst Rebirth.

“Relax. I’m not that dumb,” Gu Fei reassuringly patted Sword Demon on his back, “Assist me when the time comes.” With that, he walked toward the ten men alone.

A distance away, Young Master Han became stunned when he saw Gu Fei’s action, so he asked Brother Assist, “Has that guy gone mad? Is he intending to take them all by himself?”

“I think so,” Brother Assist replied, equally shocked.

Silver Moon and his men were also very surprised by Gu Fei’s action of going to them by himself, uncertain of what to make of it.

“What now boss? Do we still go according to plan?” someone asked Silver Moon.

“Stick to the original plan,” Silver Moon gritted his teeth, “This Mage is scary. The rest will be easy to handle once we eliminate

him.”

The rest of them nodded their heads as they readied themselves. Gu Fei was closing in on them with his every step. Twenty meters... Fifteen meters... Ten meters... The atmosphere was growing tenser the closer Gu Fei got to the enemies. But then, he suddenly stopped walking forward. The whole scene froze.

“What is he up to?” Silver Moon’s men were all quite nervous now.

They might have three pieces of Bulwark of Imprisonment to protect them, but Gu Fei’s Spell Damage was still scarily high. Therefore, those who were not holding on to the Bulwark of Imprisonment felt inexorably nervous. The seven men subconsciously pressed themselves closer to the three Guardians.

Gu Fei was not actually doing anything special. He had only stopped advancing forward because he had received a message from Young Master Han: “What do you intend to do?”

“Improvising,” Gu Fei answered.

“Even if you die, you hafta take down at least three or five of them,” Young Master Han said.

“I’ll do my best,” Gu Fei answered. With that, he continued his forward advance and the distance between him and the ten men was slowly reduced to just five meters. From his current position, he could clearly see Silver Moon’s shameless mug as well as the other men’s nervous expression.

The enemies’ anxiety reached another height when Gu Fei slowed down his steps. They still could not fathom Gu Fei’s intention. As a Mage, wasn’t he simply courting death by getting closer to them?

Four meters... Three meters... Gu Fei was still moving closer to them. Silver Moon could not take it any longer. Swiftly taking something out of his dimensional pocket, he swung that item

about and commanded, “CHARGE!”

Although the command he had given was ‘charge’, the men had actually huddled even closer behind the shields, with not even a human figure in sight. As Gu Fei was wondering if this was a variation of the command ‘charge’, golden light shone from within the clustered men. Silver Moon had activated his skill that boosted his party’s stats. Following this, the three Guardians suddenly charged toward Gu Fei with the shields still held before them. There were gaps between the shields, and the Warriors’ claymores extended outward from them like lances.

“It’s the Charge skill!” Gu Fei instantly realized. With the enemies being hidden from view by the shield wall, he failed to see the men’s starting motion for the activation of the skill.

Silver Moon’s King’s Command was currently in effect, so the speed at which these Warriors were charging at Gu Fei was swifter and fiercer than any charging attack that he had experienced before. Five men were responsible for using Charge on him, and they were charging at him while lining up in a horizontal line, stacking the three great shields closely together with two claymores sticking out between the gap in the shields.

No matter how fast one’s speed and reaction time was, it was practically impossible to dodge these charging Warriors in this proximity after they had been buffed by Silver Moon. Gu Fei was currently standing just less than three meters away from the charging men, and even Svelte Dancer on Fleetfoot would not be able to escape this charging attack under such short range. However, there was perhaps only one person in Parallel World that could properly dodge this attack right now, and that was Gu Fei. To be specific, it was the Gu Fei since last night. After all, it was only last night that Gu Fei had obtained the skill for instantaneous movement to a faraway location: Blink.

At the moment that the enemies’ claymores and shields were about to slam into him, Gu Fei casted Blink. A swish softly echoed

about as he dissolved into nothingness in his standing position. With the boost of speed from both Silver Moon's skill and their Charge, the five men were blindly rushing ahead, unaware that Gu Fei was no longer before them as their sights were blocked by the large shields.

Behind the five charging men, the remaining five – two Knights, one Warrior, one Priest, and Silver Moon himself – were running slightly slower behind. The entire team was currently glowing brightly in the same golden color that was beaming from the King's Blade that was owned by Silver Moon.

These remaining five either did not have the Charge skill or chose to not use it. Merely running after the two Warriors and three Guardians that had stampeded forward, they saw a sudden crack and distortion of the air before them, and in the next instant, Gu Fei had already appeared right before their eyes.

While they were still reeling from this shocking development, Gu Fei already wielded his sword at them, "Twin Incineration! Incinerate!" His black sword shone with purple luster as he slashed at Silver Moon and the two Knights before him with Twin Incineration.

These men's stats were boosted by King's Command, yet they were still no match for Gu Fei's Magic Attack Power. The two Knights were killed off by his one sword strike, and only Silver Moon managed to survive his attack.

Silver Moon was fully equipped with top-grade equipment, so his magic defense was rather high. This was also the case when he was at level 30. Now that he was at level 40, the equipment he had on him was an entire grade better. As for Gu Fei, his proficiency with Twin Incineration had also increased by leaps and bounds since their last confrontation, and he had also learned to mix his swordsmanship with spells. Nonetheless, this increase in Gu Fei's damage output was not as significant as Silver Moon's increase in defense and HP.

Just like in Yueye City, Gu Fei was still unable to insta-kill Silver Moon right now.

Chapter 194 - We are experts, too.

Twin Incineration also had a cool-down time, so Gu Fei could only casually swing his sword at Silver Moon for his next move. It was at this point that the opposing Priest's Heal landed on to Silver Moon, who continued to firmly hold his King's Blade aloft.

The Warrior behind Silver Moon activated Charge and promptly hurtled himself toward Gu Fei. Having been on guard for such a move, Gu Fei evaded it with a sidestep, but the Warrior did what War Without Wounds had done back then: cancel Charge and replace it with Cyclone. While it was the same sequence of actions, this Warrior's execution of it could not even compare to War Without Wounds'.

Still, his execution of the move was not slow. Thanks to Silver Moon's buffing, the Warrior's Attack Power was fearsomely high. Unfortunately, he lacked the tempo, so his transition from Charge to Cyclone was not as seamless as War Without Wounds'.

It was this break in tempo that provided Gu Fei an exploitable opportunity. With a flourish of his sword, he directly blocked the opponent's claymore mid-swing. And using the momentum that Cyclone's motion had provided, Gu Fei hopped off the ground with a tap of his foot and swiftly glided away from the Warrior.

The man's claymore in his non-dominant hand barely brushed past the very corners of Gu Fei's robe, signifying the latter's successful evasion of the Cyclone attack.

Meanwhile, the skill duration of Charge had ended for the five men who had been rushing at Gu Fei's original position. Turning around, they were greeted by the chaotic scene that Gu Fei had created, and Silver Moon hurriedly ordered the confused lot back to attack Gu Fei anew. The sword-wielding Mage chuckled to himself as he ran straight toward the five men.

The three Guardians equipped with powerful shields were very

confident of their defensive capabilities, and when they saw Gu Fei running toward them, they fearlessly confronted him by firmly holding their shields before them.

Gu Fei knew that clashing headlong with the three Guardians equipped with high defensive shields was just suicide, so he abruptly took a lateral step, intending to go to the enemies' rear. This move of his was quite similar to Royal God Call's action at the start of the PvP. Truly, looping around another person was always slower than pivoting from one spot; Gu Fei tried to run in an arc to get behind them, yet he kept finding himself facing the three shields instead.

A delighted smile spread across the three Guardians' lips as they noticed how Gu Fei had repeatedly failed to get behind them. This time, they were the ones who ran toward him. But Gu Fei merely smiled back at them, his finger pointing forward as he whispered an incantation.

At the same time, Silver Moon hollered to the three Guardians, "Watch your backs!"

A swish could be heard when Gu Fei finished his whispering, and he disappeared and reappeared just behind the three Guardians. Without even hesitating, he turned his body around and lashed out his sword, yelling, "Twin Incineration! Incinerate!"

Clink! Gu Fei's sword glanced across a shield; Silver Moon's warning had been timely. It showed the tacit understanding he had with his men, as the three men did not question his order and merely turned around. One of the Guardians managed to properly position his shield before Gu Fei had blinked himself into existence again, causing his sword to clash right into the shield.

"So it truly is Blink..." Silver Moon mumbled to himself.

Gu Fei marveled at the enemies' fast reaction. He was just about to follow up his slash with another when he saw a huge shield ramming toward him from the left. Gu Fei sidestepped to the right,

yet this move caused him to collide with something solid. Looking at it, he saw yet another large shield. And before he knew it, a third shield had slammed right into him from the front. Gu Fei scrambled to retreat, but a painful cry escaped his lips in the next second when two shields slammed into him from his left and right, effectively trapping him in the middle. “Didn’t see this coming...” Gu Fei did not know whether to laugh or cry at this turn of event. He struggled to free himself from the shields’ grip, yet the Guardians’ Strength was simply beyond his.

“Get him!” Silver Moon ordered in elation.

The order was unnecessary, though, as the remaining three Warriors had already sprinted ahead, lifting their swords high while trying to get close enough to strike at Gu Fei who was being restrained by the three Guardians. But just then, an arrow had struck the back of one of the three Guardians.

It was an arrow fired off by Royal God Call, of course. Sword Demon and him had been watching everything from a distance all this while. After Gu Fei had successfully messed up the enemies’ formation, they had been looking for a chance to mount their own assault. Royal God Call already had his bow and arrow at the ready, and seeing the scene unfold before him, he immediately fired off an arrow on Snipe at one of the three Guardians’ exposed back.

A shield’s defense stat was far superior to any other equipment, so of course the developers would put some kind of limitation on it. Take a normal equipment like defensive headgear for example; the defensive properties of a headgear would be added to the overall defense stat of a player, and even if that player was hit in some other body parts, like maybe the legs or arms, the damage they received would still be the same. A shield was different: An attack had to make contact with it first before the shield’s defensive properties could be triggered. Essentially, the great defensive boost from a shield meant nothing if an attack did not land on it.

Royal God Call's arrow stabbed into one of the Guardians' exposed back, and since the arrow did not hit his shield, the inflicted damage was of course calculated based on just his regular defense stat. The Snipe of an Archer like Royal God Call that possessed a high Physical Damage should not be underestimated. This was even more so since Royal God Call had followed up his Snipe with Double Shot and Power Shot. Given all this, the Guardian's demise for exposing his back to Royal God Call was only a matter of time.

The Priest and the Warrior who were standing by earlier hurriedly made their way over once they saw that Guardian being hit by an arrow, but the second waves of arrows from Royal God Call was still the fastest to reach that Guardian.

Right now, only two Guardians were clamping down on Gu Fei. There was still the third Guardian, yet he was just motionlessly standing there. The man whom Royal God Call had struck with four arrows saw his HP deplete fast. His other comrades could not seem to make it over in time to provide him assistance, so he hollered to the third Guardian near him, "Why are you just standing there?! I'm dying! Block the arrows for me!"

However, the third Guardian merely stood there without moving, an expression of anguish contorting his face.

"He can't do that for you at the moment..." A faint voice was heard from behind the third Guardian, and Sword Demon faded into view in the next moment. He casually returned the baton into his pocket and took out a dagger that sinisterly emitted a bluish light.

While Royal God Call had been looking for a chance to shoot arrows, Sword Demon had activated his Stealth and entered the PvP field itself earlier. The enemies made a fatal mistake when they focused their attention solely on Gu Fei.

With the third Guardian under a Dizzy state and his other

teammates still a distance away, the particular Guardian who had been wounded by numerous arrows realized that he would be dead soon if he kept on standing there to restrain Gu Fei with his shield. Thus, he decisively released Gu Fei and used his Bulwark of Imprisonment to protect himself.

“His HP is low; quickly finish him off!” Sword Demon shouted as he darted to the left. Now that Gu Fei was free again, he wordlessly matched Sword Demon’s action and darted to the right. The poor Guardian did not know whether to block the left or the right. Judging that Gu Fei’s Spell Damage was more frightening, he promptly faced his shield toward Gu Fei.

Sword Demon mercilessly used Backstab on the man, as Gu Fei casted Twin Incineration despite the shield in place.

While this dying Guardian was anxiously trying to choose which side to defend against, the long-forgotten Sharpshooter Royal God Call in the distance shot off an arrow filled with indignation. Gu Fei’s monstrously high Spell Damage had actually caused the opponents to ignore the others as potential threats. In actuality, Sword Demon and Royal God Call were also top experts. Compared to the players with the same job classes as them, the damage that the two could dish out was still unusually strong, despite it not being as OP as Gu Fei’s.

Ignoring the two men’s existence was simply too fatal. Facing a three-pronged attack, the wounded Guardian was unable to hold on to his dear life. White light flashed as the Guardian was teleported out of the PvP arena along with his shield.

At this moment, the remaining members of Silver Moon mercenary group who had moved to assist the Guardians finally arrived by their side. Gu Fei and Sword Demon unhesitatingly sprinted off upon the arrival of their enemies' reinforcement.

Sword Demon ran because he did not have the ability to take on multiple opponents by himself, while Gu Fei ran because he had

depleted his mana in that last bout.

The enemy Warriors and the Priest could simply not match Gu Fei and Sword Demon's running speed, so the two managed to safely withdraw themselves from the opposing group's formation and arrived by Royal God Call's side.

Young Master Han, who had been observing the whole affair from afar, smiled, "Not bad. Looks like we have secured victory for today's match."

Silver Moon, on the other hand, had a bitter expression on his face. Saying that they were at a disadvantage with how everything had panned out was not an exaggeration. Gu Fei, who unexpectedly possessed Blink, had successfully killed off two of their Knights earlier. Even the three Guardians were unable to trap him for long, which resulted into them losing one of those three as well.

Young Master's Elite was now ahead in terms of kill points, essentially fulfilling the conditions for Grand Kiting – a strategy that Silver Moon's team was extremely wary of. This was because his team did not have anyone who could match Gu Fei's, Royal God Call's, or Sword Demon's speed. Even Young Master Han, War Without Wounds, and Brother Assist would likely have the same movement speed as Silver Moon's mercenaries, and it would be hard to target those three since they were even further away. Even if Silver Moon had King's Blade to increase his men's stats, the duration that he could channel this skill was too short; losing 4% of his mana for every second, this meant that he could only keep it up for twenty-five seconds. They absolutely had no way of catching up to the three speedsters within that limited timeframe.

At a distance, Gu Fei was eating fruit to recover his mana and was cheerfully appreciating the look of consternation on the remaining enemy troops' faces with Sword Demon and Royal God Call. "What now, boss?" Upon seeing that the three of Gu Fei, Sword Demon, and Royal God Call had no intention of continuing to fight with

them any longer, these men finally realized how grave their situation was and sought the advice of their leader, Silver Moon.

Silver Moon looked all around him in confusion. Gu Fei's group was fast, so chasing after them was not even feasible. He gestured for his men to make their way toward the other three opponents. But before they could even take more than three steps, those three immediately ran off.

“Sigh...” Even this last flicker of hope was extinguished. Silver Moon did not know what to do, knowing that his opponents would try to drag the time out like this. Although the map was small, Silver Moon lacked enough men to surround the targets and assert pressure all over the map. The only way to kill their opponents was to chase after them, but....

Chapter 195 - Getting Him to Reveal Himself

Gu Fei, Sword Demon, and Royal God Call were too fast for them, so Silver Moon commanded his men to focus on the other three slower opponents, instead. But as soon as Young Master Han, War Without Wounds, and Brother Assist started running away, Silver Moon realized that the three were simply too far away, so he let out a sigh and ordered his men to stop chasing after the three.

Silver Moon's sigh did not escape Gu Fei, Sword Demon, and Royal God Call's keen eyes. Gu Fei could not be bothered to converse with Silver Moon, while Sword Demon lacked interest in a war of words. Only Royal God Call was childish enough to make fun of Silver Moon for it, "Silver Moon bro, do we really have to continue this fight? Why don't you people just kill yourselves to save us the trouble?"

"This sh*tty brat! What are you insinuating?!" Although their situation was indeed dire, Silver Moon's fellow mercenaries refused to take Royal God Call's insulting words lying down and immediately hurled back slurs at him. Silver Moon was actually the only one who had not responded to Royal God Call's taunting and merely continued to ponder on a solution to their predicament.

Royal God Call was filled with despicable pride as he continued to wage verbal war with the enemies. Gu Fei steadily munched on his fruit, and Sword Demon relayed the information based on his use of Appraisal to Young Master Han, Brother Assist, and War Without Wounds.

Sword Demon had tried appraising Silver Moon's golden sword for several times already, but he had failed to find out anything about the item in the end. For a weapon's traits and stats to still remain unknown despite being appraised by someone with a high ranking for the Appraisal skill, it could only mean that the weapon itself was a higher level weapon like Gu Fei's Moonlit Nightfalls.

“I’ll get closer to Appraise it myself!” Brother Assist was unwilling to let this opportunity go, especially since it was his passion to uncover the secrets of unknown items. He then proceeded to climb up the small hill with War Without Wounds and Young Master Han.

Silver Moon could not fathom why their three enemies were suddenly advancing toward them instead of fleeing, but it was actually a good thing for him, so he acted as if he did not notice their movement and averted his gaze to the acrimonious verbal exchange happening next to him. All the while, he was telling his companions on the mercenary channel to prepare themselves for a fight at any given time and to try and take down the enemies in one fell swoop.

However, Young Master Han and the two others only proceeded up to where Gu Fei and the rest were and explained Brother Assist’s intention.

“Is your Appraisal’s rank higher than mine?” Sword Demon asked.

“Maybe my luck will be better than yours,” Brother Assist replied, putting on the air of an expert. As long as a matter did not involve fighting, Brother Assist was more than willing to be boastful. “I’m off!” Brother Assist said this in a tone that sounded as if he was bound for a kamikaze trip. A certain distance was required for the Appraisal skill to work, and since he did not have the speed of Gu Fei or the other speed demons in Young Master’s Elite, he was not sure if he could make it back after getting close to the enemies.

“Must you be this persistent in finding out just what sword he is using?!” someone tried to dissuade Brother Assist from taking the risk.

“It’s a hobby,” Brother Assist smiled.

“We’ll cover you,” Gu Fei said, somewhat understanding the

mentality of someone passionate over something.

Young Master Han, for his part, reacted indifferently, “Actually, you guys don’t need to assist him. We are currently ahead by 3 kill points against them. Giving them 1 kill point won’t affect our group’s victory.”

Everyone could not believe how indifferent Young Master Han was about the life and death of a comrade.

“What Young Master said makes sense. Plus, I haven’t been of much use in this match!” Brother Assist agreed.

“No can do! We’re friends, after all!” Royal God Call exclaimed emphatically. When everyone threw him a disgusted look, he asked perplexedly, “Did I say something wrong?”

“You didn’t, but—” Gu Fei began.

“—But as a group of adults, what you’ve said is cringe-worthy,” Young Master Han finished.

Even Brother Assist laughed at this and said, “It’s good to be young”, before walking toward Silver Moon.

“F*CK! It’s not like you guys are that much older than me!” Royal God Call exclaimed indignantly.

“The point is that we’re not as young and naive as you are!” War Without Wounds had on an expression as if he had seen much in life.

“F*ck off! You’re the old one, alright!” Royal God Call shouted at War Without Wounds.

War Without Wounds lifted his arm with a glare, but Royal God Call had already run off far from him.

The ones who really took actions to words were Sword Demon and Gu Fei. When each of them flanked Brother Assist’s left and right as they followed him toward Silver Moon, Sword Demon and Gu Fei could not help but smile at each other for doing the same

thing. Young Master Han expressionlessly stared at the two, unimpressed by their action.

“There’s really no need...” Brother Assist persuaded the two to return to the group.

“I wanna try my luck again,” Sword Demon said.

“I need to train my Appraisal as well, so I can’t let this chance go,” Gu Fei said.

Brother Assist no longer insisted and just smiled at the two as they made their way up the hill together.

Atop the hill, Silver Moon continued to monitor the enemies’ activity below. He could not eavesdrop on their conversation, so he had no idea on why the three men were making their way up the hill.

The members of Young Master’s Elite should logically be distancing themselves from his group to safeguard their victory for this match, yet three of them were actually heading this way. Just what were they trying to achieve?

Furthermore, there was a Knight among them. Silver Moon was a Knight himself, so he could say with surety that it was not a job class that could determine the match’s outcome.

Suspicion filled his heart and he hesitated over whether his group should attack or defend right now. The confidence he had to defeat his current opponents with his ability to buff his comrades had long disappeared ever since they managed to kill three of his men.

Compared to when Gu Fei approached them by himself earlier, Silver Moon and company felt even more anxious right now at the sight of the three men of Young Master’s Elite nearing them.

“Huddle up! Watch your backs,” Silver Moon barked this order.

The remaining seven men stood closer to one another, with the

two Guardians bracing their large shields to the front, Silver Moon and the Priest occupying the center, and the three other Warriors flanking the sides according to instructions. One Warrior stood facing the right, another faced the left, and the last one faced the rear. This was done to prevent Gu Fei from catching them by surprise when he blinked himself anywhere around them.

“F*ck!” Seeing such a formation, Gu Fei and the others could only curse aloud.

With Silver Moon hidden behind the two Guardians’ raised shields, how was Brother Assist going to appraise him?

The trio moved to the enemies’ flank, but this only caused Silver Moon’s formation to turn in response. The three found themselves facing the two large shields in their general direction no matter which direction they moved, making even Gu Fei annoyed.

“Oi! Call Silver Moon out!” Gu Fei went from passive to active.

A gap appeared between the two large shields, yet Silver Moon did not show his face. Rather, he bellowed from behind the shield wall, “Miles bro, why are you calling for me?”

“To talk,” Gu Fei replied.

“Speak, then.”

“It’s better if you show your face first,” Gu Fei insisted.

“Oh? There’s nothing to talk about, then.” The more Silver Moon heard from Gu Fei, the more fearful he grew of showing his face, as he fully assumed that they had prepared some sort of trap to kill him off.

Gu Fei shrugged helplessly at Brother Assist and Sword Demon.

“Guess there’s no other way. Let’s leave,” Brother Assist sighed.

“What?! Why?” Gu Fei asked.

“Well... How can we appraise him if he’s unwilling to appear before us?” Brother Assist replied with a question.

“If he’s not showing himself, we’ll just create an situation that would force him to do just that!” Gu Fei declared resolutely.

“How can that be done?” Brother Assist asked.

“I’ll just kill everyone else,” Gu Fei pulled out his sword.

“Don’t be so rash!” Sword Demon and Brother Assist tried to stop him.

The two Guardians in charge of observing the enemies’ motion immediately exclaimed to the men behind them, “That Mage has pulled out his sword.”

“Pay close attention to your surroundings, everyone! He is about to use Blink!” Silver Moon hurriedly warned.

“Translocation! Blink!” Gu Fei chanted.

Gu Fei disappeared with a swish from his spot and instantly materialized behind the Silver Moon’s PvP formation, promptly stabbing his sword backward.

The Warrior behind thought that he had gained the upper hand when he saw Gu Fei appear before him with his back turned, but Gu Fei unexpectedly stabbed his sword backward without even turning around. This was Gu Fei’s fighting style that always strove to deliver the quickest and smoothest attacks possible, making him seem fast and indomitable.

The Warrior, who had tried to attack first, ended up blocking Gu Fei’s backhanded stab instead. Unfortunately for the Warrior, Gu Fei had just cast Twin Incineration while thrusting his sword at an angle that no ordinary people could defend against. The combination of the spell’s magic damage and sword’s physical damage had just ensured the Warrior’s death.

The other mercenaries of Silver Moon did not just watch their comrade die in vain, and they moved in to unleash their own attacks on Gu Fei. The two Guardians lifted their shields in an attempt to clamp Gu Fei down from both ends.

“Not this again!” Gu Fei hollered. Choosing not to evade the shields this time, he instead fished out Sacred Flames of Baptism from his dimensional pocket and positioned it before him horizontally.

The Chinese broadsword’s width was wider than a man’s girth, so it effectively prevented the two shields from trapping Gu Fei between them once more. He then stamped the two shields down with his legs to propel himself upward. Gu Fei’s meager Strength was of course not enough to kick the two Guardians away, but it was still sufficient to help lift his body upward, and he succeeded in leaping away to escape the two shields’ entrapment by doing that. Borrowing the momentum of his falling body, Gu Fei cleaved his sword downward to one of the Guardian, and the sound of metal cutting metal could be heard echoing in the next instant.

The damage inflicted on the Guardian by Moonlit Nightfalls’ basic attack was actually not much, but the deafening sound of Gu Fei’s strike fooled everyone nearby into thinking that he had managed to cut the Guardian in half. It was only when the Guardian turned around that everyone realized that he was still alive.

“Twin Incineration! Incinerate!” The cool-down time ended for Twin Incineration that he had cast earlier, so Gu Fei quickly cast another one and powered his sword slash to the Guardian and the Warrior beside him with it.

The Guardian survived the blow, but the other Warrior did not, and the latter disappeared in a flash of white light.

Actually, Gu Fei’s attack was not just powered by Moonlight Nightfalls’ Physical Damage and Spell Damage, but also by the sword’s ‘10% chance of dealing Fatal Blow’ trait. Moreover, Gu Fei had items that increased his chances of proccing the additional fire attack. It was when all these effects stacked together that Gu Fei’s damage could be viewed as powerful beyond belief.

Chapter 196 - You are near, that is why.

Gu Fei's maximum damage output could only be fully unleashed when he was in close combat, as the additional fire attack as well as the Fatal Blow trait would only be activated when his weapon made contact with the enemy, and casting Descending Wheel of Flames and similar AOE spells would not generate these effects at all.

At this moment, Gu Fei had fortunately procured all these traits. With the Physical and Spell Damage of Moonlit Nightfalls, Twin Incineration's damage, 10% Fatal Blow, and the additional fire attack... Gu Fei managed to take down the enemy Warrior with his one sword slash.

This feat meant more than just that, however. The Warrior had yet to undergo his Job Class Advancement, but given his stat point allocation, he already possessed a large HP pool. Moreover, he had equipped himself with high magic defense gear all over after learning of Gu Fei's monstrously high Magic Attack Power. Who knew that that would still not be enough to survive Gu Fei's one sword slash, though?

Silver Moon and his fellow mercenaries were of course aware of their companion's high HP and how he had high resistance to magic attacks, so they were horrified that Gu Fei could finish him off with just one strike. Through Appraisal, they managed to identify Gu Fei's various accessories that granted him higher chances of dealing additional fire attack, but they failed to get any information about his sword and robe.

Silver Moon, who owned King's Blade, naturally knew what it meant when an item could not be perused through the current standard of Appraisal: Gu Fei's two pieces of equipment were at the forefront in terms of grade and tier, and the others could not appraise it since their levels were considered lower than those equipment.

Just what is so special about his sword and robe? This thought filtered through the minds of everyone in Silver Moon's group as they got even more curious about Gu Fei's two unidentified items.

Actually, Brother Assist's desire to uncover the secret behind Silver Moon's sword was equal to Silver Moon's desire to find out about Gu Fei's equipment. In fact, his feeling might even be stronger than Brother Assist's, as their side was at a disadvantage right now due to their lack of understanding of Gu Fei's equipment. Losing the current match without finding out the real deal behind those two pieces of equipment would be akin to dying senselessly without accomplishing anything.

Silver Moon was within arm's reach of Gu Fei and the latter only had to lift his hand to cut the former, but recalling Brother Assist's intention to appraise Silver Moon, Gu Fei temporarily spared his life and extended his sword toward another Warrior, instead.

Silver Moon had a total of three Guardians, three Knights (including himself), three Warriors, and one Priest in the beginning, but the three from Young Master's Elite had already gotten rid of one Guardian, two Knights, and two Warriors. Gu Fei was currently assaulting the last Warrior of their bunch, who happened to be the one with the highest damage output in Silver Moon's team.

While the two Guardians had Charge, Cyclone, and other skills of the Warrior job class, their weapon of choice was a shield, so their damage output was still lower than the sole remaining Warrior, since shields boosted their defensive capabilities more than their offensive capabilities.

"Not good! Everyone, protect our Warrior!" Counting the remaining mercenaries he had in his team, Silver Moon realized the importance of this last Warrior and quickly gave out this order when he saw Gu Fei make his way toward the man.

Gu Fei had already struck the target with his sword, but Silver

Moon's timely warning had allowed the Priest to quickly bestow Heal on the Warrior. Gu Fei's Twin Incineration was still on cool-down, so his sword's basic attack was easily countered by that Heal, making it seem as if Gu Fei had not attacked the Warrior in the first place.

Silver Moon immediately rushed over and wedged his sword between the two in an attempt to protect the Warrior from Gu Fei, while the two Guardians also moved close to the Warrior and raised their shields up on his left and right. Somehow, Silver Moon's current formation had ended up revolving around their last remaining Warrior.

Just as Silver Moon was feeling gratified at his quick-wittedness, he saw Gu Fei approach the Priest in a few quick strides.

"Twin Incineration! Incinerate!" Gu Fei's sword came cleaving down.

Most Priests would be flustered when their enemies drew near them, but this Priest actually remained calm. With Gu Fei's fast speed, the Priest knew that fleeing was not an option, so he settled for bestowing Heal on himself when Gu Fei's sword came slashing down.

Priests had an edge in Endurance, so they could withstand Gu Fei's attack as long as they focused their points to that stat at level 40. This Priest before Gu Fei had done exactly that and allocated most of his points to Endurance. He was a rather unfortunate fellow, though, as Gu Fei was not the only one that was dealing with him.

A yellowish light infused Gu Fei's body earlier when he casted Twin Incineration. It was the Blessing of Intelligence by the Knight Brother Assist, which increased the former's Spell Damage to a whole new level. At the same time, Sword Demon had appeared from behind the Priest and executed Backstab with his dagger, his body pulsing red from Brother Assist's Blessing of Strength.

Despite bestowing Heal on himself beforehand, the Priest could only watch his HP drop to nothing when both attacks landed on him from the front and the back.

“Is the Priest your target all along? Were you merely pretending to strike at the Warrior to fool us into isolating our Priest?” Silver Moon’s extremities went cold upon witnessing the death of his Priest. He looked at the two Guardians protecting the Warrior and his heart seethed with hate-filled regret.

Gu Fei looked blankly at him before smiling, “It’s nothing that fancy.”

“Then...” Silver Moon was nonplussed.

“I targeted your last Warrior earlier because he was the closest to me, that’s all,” Gu Fei pointed to the Warrior that Silver Moon and the rest were heavily guarding and said, “I would attack anyone who was in his position just then.”

Silver Moon was coughing up blood inside him. He had put too much emphasis on Gu Fei’s Spell Damage, causing him to become very nervous. Making mistakes when one was anxious was easy, and this blunder of his had caused the death of their Priest. Without the Priest, the HP of Silver Moon’s members would only dwindle without the possibility of recovery. This meant that their defeat was inevitable.

Young Master Han and the rest, who were looking from afar, also saw the overwhelming advantage that their force had gained in their foray and realized the futility of employing the Grand Kiting strategy, as facing the remaining four enemies head on and killing them was no longer a problem. As such, the others promptly made their way over, while Gu Fei retreated to a safe distance. The reason was of course Gu Fei’s need to eat fruit again.

“Man, your mana... He he he!” Several of his fellow mercenaries could only chuckle teasingly.

Gu Fei ignored their teasing and merely indicated to Brother Assist the very exposed Silver Moon, “Quickly appraise him!”

“I’ve already appraised him. I really can’t get anything out of it!” Brother Assist shook his head and sighed.

“Isn’t it just a matter of probability when it comes to appraising something successfully?” Gu Fei asked.

“Maybe...” The officials did not clearly provide information on this matter, so nobody could tell for sure.

“Let’s kill the rest and leave Silver Moon alive, so that you can appraise him for a hundred times. Maybe, you will find something out by doing that,” Gu Fei suggested.

“Is this how you plan to torture him?” Everyone sharply inhaled.

“Uhm... Isn’t this something you need?” Gu Fei questioningly gazed at Brother Assist.

Brother Assist just wiped the non-existent sweat off his forehead.

“Let’s talk about this after we kill the rest,” Young Master Han waved his hand dismissively.

“Wait for me to recover my mana!” Gu Fei requested hurriedly.

“Chill, man. You’ve already killed a few; why don’t you leave the rest to us and let us earn some kill points?” Several of his fellow mercenaries eagerly rubbed their fists and palms as they went forward, and it was obvious that they had no intention of waiting for Gu Fei at all.

Straightforwardly clashing with one another without any strategy... This essentially boiled down to their skills and the teamwork of both sides. Silver Moon mercenary group’s two Guardians and one Warrior formed a triangle with Silver Moon at its core, and he blessed the three with Blessing of Strength. This was to ensure that his comrades would grow even stronger when he used King’s Command later.

Over by Young Master's Elite mercenary group, each person did what he was best at. Royal God Call fired off arrows from afar, War Without Wounds and Sword Demon closed in on the enemies to strike at an opportune moment, Brother Assist blessed his comrades accordingly, and Young Master Han readied his staff to bestow Heal on his team's two melee job classes. Since Silver Moon and his fellow mercenaries did not have any long-range capabilities, there was no need for Young Master's Elite to worry about long-range attacks at all.

Once War Without Wounds and Sword Demon were near enough, Silver Moon raised his sword, and the two Guardians and one Warrior were suddenly infused by golden light and used Charge to rush at the approaching two.

The two were already prepared for this; Sword Demon activated Fleetfoot and circled around the three, while War Without Wounds braced himself to receive the charging enemies. While the ensuing collision looked frightening to onlookers, the game still calculated the damage systematically. In the end, War Without Wounds' high defense rendered the enemies' tackle as ineffectual.

After purposely receiving the enemies' Charge, War Without Wounds did not counterattack and instead chose to shout out a number behind him.

Young Master Han smiled and relayed this to Brother Assist.

Brother Assist quickly understood what was happening and promptly added the equipment data he had appraised from the Guardians to do some calculation. Since the Guardians' weapons were shields, their Attack Power was only based off on their Strength as well as the skill's inherent damage, simplifying Brother Assist's calculation process. Brother Assist took out a booklet and began to solve it using Xs and Ys. Royal God Call temporarily stopped his attack to take a look at Brother Assist's calculation, "Is there a need to do column equations?"

Young Master Han looked sideways at Royal God Call, “I knew it. A student like you who play games every day truly doesn’t spend time on his studies. You call that ‘column equations’? That’s ‘function’, which uses X and Y as variables. Do you understand what variables are? It’s....”

Their three opponents that were under the effect of King’s Command were desperate to score a hit against them fast, as there was a limit to how long Silver Moon could use that skill. Unfortunately for their enemies, Young Master’s Elite was made up of a bunch of old hands that were not foolish enough to confront them at such a period. Instead, they scattered about and fled in different directions. Even War Without Wounds who was closest to the buffed enemies had managed to quickly pull away from them with his life intact by using Charge.

Eventually, the King’s Command skill ended and the two Guardians and one Warrior returned to their normal state.

Young Master Han noted the time and muttered, “Silver Moon’s skill lasted about twenty-five seconds last time, but it did not even reach twenty-five seconds now. Probably because he has blessed each of his three comrades before this. By the looks of things, that skill depletes his mana as he channels it.” With that, he shouted to his team’s Knight, “How’s your calculation progressing, Brother Assist?”

“Don’t rush me! How can I calculate all these so quickly? I don’t know how much damage their Charge skill can provide, so my calculation may not be too accurate. I think it’s better to find someone to get tackled again!” Brother Assist replied.

“But the battle is about to end already...” Young Master Han said as he stared at a certain direction.

In that direction, Gu Fei, who had already recovered his mana, was sprinting over with a huff.

Chapter 197 - Rekindling Old Grudges

“Leave them to me!” Gu Fei declared as he appeared in the middle of the skirmish.

Royal God Call and the others felt depressed. The remaining enemies were job classes that possessed higher physical defense compared to magic defense, especially the two Guardians who did not even feel a thing when Royal God Call was firing arrows at them, so Gu Fei with his high Spell Damage would definitely be able to deal with them better.

However, their pride as expert gamers would not allow them to just sit back and let Gu Fei deal with the enemies alone. Knowing that they would be lucky enough to get in an attack or two against the enemies if they tried, Sword Demon and War Without Wounds pounced on Silver Moon and his gang with the ferocity of starving tigers, while Royal God Call fired off arrows in the distance at an insane speed.

Silver Moon and his remaining men who suddenly found themselves being attacked by their opponents with such ferocity subconsciously began edging away from their crazed aggressors.

The sound of objects sailing through the air echoed about as Royal God Call’s arrows flew toward the enemies incessantly.

“Watch where you’re firing!” Gu Fei bellowed in frustration. Having dodged two arrows consecutively, he got this feeling that Royal God Call was treating him as a target as well.

Royal God Call merely continued shooting at his targets like a madman, spraying arrows all over the place. And for every ten arrows he fired off, almost half of them would fly toward Gu Fei.

“I’ll kill you!” Gu Fei could no longer bear it and charged toward Royal God Call.

The bratty Archer turned tail and ran, shouting, “Sword Demon

and Wounds, I'll leave the rest to you!"

Royal God Call knew that Gu Fei's current limit was teleporting himself in a five-meter radius, so he made sure to be at least that far away from the latter, essentially rendering the skill useless. Gu Fei was left with no choice but to chase after him, knowing full well that he would only be harassed by the latter if he did not do so. Helpless, Gu Fei sought Young Master Han's help, "Hey! Do something about this. We shan't be fooling around during an important fight like this!"

Young Master Han nodded his head, "I originally did not plan to interfere, but since you asked..." Pausing for effect, he said sternly to Gu Fei, "You have been hogging all the fun all this while, you know? Go to a corner and rest up. Give everyone here some chance to enjoy themselves!"

"Ah..." Gu Fei was stunned into silence.

Sword Demon and War Without Wounds had already begun exchanging blows with the enemies.

War Without Wounds unleashed his ultimate move, Cyclone, from the get-go, and the Guardian facing him held the large shield to his front in response. The sound of clashing metal rang across the PvP field. This was the first time that someone had actually dared to face Cyclone forcefully. Sparks flew as War Without Wounds' two claymores grinded against the large shield, making him seem like a welder who was hard at work.

As for Sword Demon, he did not manage to find an opportunity to attack the enemies after swiftly making his way around them. The enemies were obviously veterans at PvPing, and their current triangular formation with Silver Moon at its core was a testament to this fact, as it provided Sword Demon no exploitable gap to initiate a sneak attack on them.

A Thief like him could not clash head on with a Warrior, as he would just be courting death if he did so given his lower HP and

defense. As such, Sword Demon settled for fighting a less risky opponent: the Guardian that had high defense but slightly weak offense. Fortunately for him, Silver Moon mercenary group's lack of a Priest would make his opponent's every drop of HP irrecoverable for the remainder of this PvP match.

Viciously plunging his Frost Memories toward the Guardian's large shield, Sword Demon lucked out as his one stab procced the dagger's Fatal Blow.

Fatal Blow was the bane to any high-defense and high-HP job class's existence, as it ignored defense entirely and induced damage based off a percentage of the target's HP. In other words, the larger the target's HP pool, the greater the damage Fatal Blow would induce.

Sword Demon's Frost Memories had a 30% chance of proccing Fatal Blow with a 30% Fatality rate. This rather frightening trait was precisely why Sword Demon continued to wield the dagger despite its Attack Power being meager by the current standards. In an instant, 30% of the Guardian's HP was shaved off by that Fatal Blow, causing him to break out in cold sweat. Ever since he had started using Bulwark of Imprisonment, not one player had been able to inflict such a high damage on him at once. He knew that it was accomplished with Fatal Blow, but this was still the first time he had seen a 30% Fatality rate.

That one strike greatly drummed up Sword Demon's morale, and his subsequent thrusts became even more ferocious.

Although Fatal Blow was terrifying, it could not actually cause death. With the damage being based off on the target's current HP pool and the calculation being done in percentage, Fatal Blow would logically never see its recipient's HP reach zero. However, Sword Demon could only depend on this 30% proc rate of Fatal Blow to deal damage on the Guardian, as his Frost Memories' basic Attack Power could not penetrate the enemy's high defense.

While they had their fair share of fun, Sword Demon and War Without Wounds grew suspicious when they noticed that the two Guardians were the only ones doing the defending while Silver Moon and the remaining Warrior did not even try to attack them. Something seemed wrong, so War Without Wounds conveyed to Sword Demon through eye-contact his intention to jointly attack the last remaining Warrior first, since the two Guardians and the Knight Silver Moon were probably defending this only Warrior for a purpose. Sword Demon got his message, and both attempted to flank the sides of the enemies' triangular formation. Their intention was easily seen through by their enemies, though, and the four men skillfully changed their positions in response to Sword Demon and War Without Wounds' movement around them.

They continued to dance to this music until Silver Moon suddenly uttered something from within the formation while raising his King's Blade. In the next moment, his three companions had received Blessing of Health.

Blessing of Health would regenerate a bit of its recipient's HP every five seconds. While five seconds would usually be seen as a long time in a fast-paced fight, these Guardians would have no trouble lasting for five seconds with their high defense. Silver Moon's muttering did not stop there, though, and pure white light soon fell on the two Guardians, looking similar to a Priest's Heal.

Sword Demon and the rest felt stunned. Holy Healing. This was the first skill that a Knight who had chosen to be a Holy Knight during the Job Class Advancement would learn. Just like the Priest's Heal, this skill could instantly recover a player's HP.

Sword Demon and War Without Wounds felt very despondent. Silver Moon's skill put a damper on their plan to kill the enemies by chipping off their HP bit by bit. At the end of the day, the two Guardians still had high physical defense.

Just as the two were helplessly thinking of a new way to deal

with their opponents, their enemies suddenly turned their defense into offense, with the two Guardians activating Charge and slamming their shields into their respective targets.

The damage they inflicted was not substantial, but Charge had the chance of applying the Dizzy status effect. War Without Wounds was unluckily afflicted by this, rendering him temporarily immobile. The enemies promptly surrounded him. As for Sword Demon, although he fortunately did not get afflicted by that effect, he was nevertheless thrown off for quite a distance by that shield slam.

“Look,” Young Master Han said to Brother Assist, “They were staunchly defending just then so that Silver Moon could recover his mana. This just proves that that OP skill of his really depletes his mana as he channels it. He has actually used up all his mana a while ago.”

Brother Assist vigorously nodded his head as he yelled to War Without Wounds, “How much damage did that Charge inflict on you just now?”

“How much damage, my a*s! Come and help me already!” War Without Wounds howled as he was currently being surrounded by four men. The two Guardians did not have much Attack Power, but they effectively trapped War Without Wounds by pressing their shields firmly against War Without Wounds on his left and right sides. Meanwhile, Silver Moon and the other Warrior started stabbing him in a frenzy while standing on his front and back.

Brother Assist’s eyes shone brightly as he roared, “How much is that sword’s damage? Quickly write it down!” He intended to use this chance to find out the Attack Power of Silver Moon’s King’s Blade.

“What a bunch of degenerates!” War Without Wounds moaned to the sky in grief.

“Keep in mind that your death must not be in vain!” Brother

Assist yelled, "Gather as much data as you can!"

Although Brother Assist said this, not one of them would actually let War Without Wounds die just like this. All stopped what they were doing as they scrambled to aid him. Young Master Han swiftly tossed Heal on to him, Brother Assist bolstered his defense with Blessing of Resilience, and Sword Demon activated Fleetfoot while holding a baton to get closer to those four encircling him. Even the squabbling Gu Fei and Royal God Call swung by to give him a helping hand; Royal God Call shot off arrows to the enemies, while Gu Fei tossed Fireball over.

"Just a little bit more, guys!" Silver Moon and his gang were gritting their teeth at the moment, hoping to kill off War Without Wounds before his assistance arrive. However, War Without Wounds' defense was no joke either, and there was simply not enough time for them to kill him off when there were only two of them assaulting him. Seeing their inefficiency to quickly do the deed, Silver Moon hollered at his men, "DISPERSE!"

The men quickly separated without a complaint. The two Guardians retreated and Silver Moon sidestepped as he granted Blessing of Strength on the Warrior.

The Warrior growlingly lowered his claymore to his side, preparing to use Cyclone on War Without Wounds. The Cyclone skill was far more efficient than their basic attacks put together, so whether they could kill War Without Wounds depended on this entirely.

Everything happened so swiftly that War Without Wounds had no time to react. And right when these four hopeful men were hoping that they could score their first kill of the day, the space behind War Without Wounds suddenly distorted and shattered.

"F*ck!" Silver Moon thundered. He had seen this scene many times today, and it had given him a headache every time.

Gu Fei blinked himself right behind War Without Wounds, his

sword already swinging with Twin Incineration and homing in on the Warrior's body. He managed to insta-kill the Warrior before the latter could even begin the process for Cyclone.

This Warrior had evidently focused on a Strength build, so his HP was not particularly high. Given how the physical defense of Warriors did not protect them from spells, the Warrior immediately died with flame scorching his body.

“Miles! Now that's what I call a real brother!” War Without Wounds choked with emotions.

“What nonsense are you talking about? I merely saved you because we won't be attaining a 'perfect' score if you die, which in turn will decrease our earnings of gold coins and experience points by quite a lot,” Gu Fei bluntly said, putting emphasis on 'gold coins'. Gu Fei was sorely in need of money right now. He had incurred a debt of 1800 gold coins, after all.

Seeing that War Without Wounds had been saved, Brother Assist quickly asked, “What's the number? Did you write it down or not?!”

War Without Wounds was in tears right now, “Is there even anyone who cares for my well-being?!”

As he said that, Royal God Call's voice came over, gazing on War Without Wounds wistfully, “Why didn't you die? What a waste.”

Gu Fei inclined his head, “See? At least someone cares if you're dead or alive.”

War Without Wounds bawled his eyes out.

Silver Moon mercenary group only had three men left. With the death of their sole offensive force, the remaining three were clueless on what they should do next. Meanwhile, the men of Young Master's Elite had finally settled down after all those bickering. Both sides lined themselves up across one another, staring one another down.

Brother Assist was crestfallen upon learning that not one piece of data had been collected before. His situation was akin to a gamer who had fought a monster that dropped a top-grade equipment, only for him to fail at picking it up. With no one moving or saying a word, Brother Assist fearlessly taunted the two Guardians, “I dare you to charge at me!”

Silver Moon bewilderedly stared at him, thinking that he had gone mad. Even now, he still did not notice that Brother Assist and the lot were actually trying to discover the stats of his King’s Blade.

Silver Moon’s gaze only emboldened Brother Assist further, “What are you looking at? Come and slay me if you’ve got the balls!”

The calm and collected Sword Demon dragged Brother Assist to the side, “I’ve taken note of the damage from their Charge.”

Brother Assist was overjoyed, and he happily requested the damage output data from Sword Demon. This was the last figure he needed to complete his calculation regarding Silver Moon’s skill.

Noting down the figure in his little booklet, Brother Assist finally revealed a sated smile as he completed his calculations, “Looks like it bolsters their stats, such as speed and HP, by around 15% all at once. That’s OP, alright!”

“But the skill’s cool-down time is about ten minutes, and it can only be channeled for twenty-five seconds, so it can only provide a sudden burst in attack,” Young Master Han added.

“Why do I feel like it’s not just twenty-five seconds back in Yueye City? It seems longer then!” Royal God Call said.

The few of them continued to chat and discuss this matter, totally disregarding the three enemies before them as if they were just part of the scenery.

Silver Moon felt shocked upon learning that his opponents had

managed to uncover every detail of his King's Command skill. At this time, Gu Fei stepped forward with a smile on his lips, "Let them keep talking, and let's continue where we left off!"

Silver Moon carefully gazed at the six men before him, smiling in returning, "No need. We've lost." With that, he nodded toward his two men and the three of them disappeared in flashes of white light.

"What happened?" Gu Fei asked, baffled.

"They forfeited," Young Master Han replied passively.

"What a pity!" Gu Fei sighed, "I've only managed to slice him once."

"You will get your chance in the future," Young Master Han said, "That look he gave us before disappearing is filled with hatred, so it's only a matter of time before he settles the score with us for that grudge in Yueye City and for our action that ruined his plan today."

"Oh, how I await that day, then," Gu Fei said wistfully.

Chapter 198 - Call for Merit

In the end, the match with Silver Moon mercenary group was one that was thrilling yet not life threatening, and Gu Fei's repeated usage of Blink was enough to turn Silver Moon and his gang into a mess.

If Gu Fei were a normal Mage, Blink would be something easy to deal with. Unfortunately for his past and would-be opponents, Gu Fei had been using his spells quite differently from the average Mages in Parallel World. His use of Blink to instantly appear before his targets to cleave them in halves was akin to a Warrior gaining access to a teleportation skill – a fact that many found disconcerting.

When the system finished tallying the score of Young Master's Elite for this round of match and teleported the six out of the PvP arena, the first individuals they saw were actually Silver Moon and his mercenaries.

“Good fight!” Seeing the six men appear, Silver Moon swiftly flashed them a broad grin.

The six were quite surprised by this. Honestly speaking, most competitors would still exchange a few words outside the PvP arenas after concluding their respective matches. After all, the tournaments were something that the game company had organized, so no vendetta existed between parties. Sometimes, even goodwill would be generated from these exchanges! Losing only meant that their opponents were skilled individuals, so most players would be more than happy to befriend such talented people.

However, Young Master Han reminded everyone that Silver Moon was no stranger to Young Master's Elite since they had clashed with him before in Yueye City. Not to mention that they had just eliminated his mercenary group just now, and he might

probably recognize a few familiar faces... With everything that had happened, the six men were merely hoping that he would not ambush them once they exited the PvP arena. Who would have guessed that he would warmly greet them, instead?

Silver Moon wore a fawning expression on his face as he shook hands with the six men, “How should I address you guys?” Excluding Gu Fei whom he already knew, Silver Moon proceeded to ask the rest for their IGNs.

Given that these men had well-known names in the online gaming community, Silver Moon could not help but exclaim, “I’ve always been a fan!” upon hearing their IGNs.

This was done until he got to Young Master Han. Silver Moon inclined his head to think for quite some time, but he could not recall the name as anyone of prominence, eventually treating him as a newly minted expert like Gu Fei. “To think Yunduan City has congregated so many epic level players!” Silver Moon could not help but sigh in awe.

Epic level! A few of these experts felt ten feet taller upon hearing such a wonderful praise. Royal God Call’s expert usage of Mage, War Without Wounds’ skills as a Warrior, Brother Assist’s gaming knowledge, Sword Demon’s kingly temperament... Silver Moon continued to stroke these experts’ ego one by one for quite some time by praising them for the aspects that these individuals were famous for in past MMOs.

He launched his offensive using candied words and rich praises! Gu Fei saw how elated Royal God Call, War Without Wounds, and even Brother Assist were upon being placed up high on a pedestal.

Only Sword Demon lived up to his name as a seasoned veteran, showing resilience to Silver Moon’s sycophantic and ass-kissing behavior. Because Silver Moon did not know about Young Master Han’s original identity, he could only compliment his physical appearance, “This bro here is too good-looking!”

“I know,” Young Master Han lightly answered, immediately causing Silver Moon to feel stunned for a good three seconds. He firmly shut his mouth to prevent himself from blurting this out, “Too shameless!”

And lastly, he looked toward Gu Fei. Unlike the others whom he had complimented with excessive flattery, Silver Moon merely said this, “Bro, you’re very strong!”

Gu Fei humbly smiled. When Silver Moon properly greeted all, he showed reluctance to part as he bade them farewell, “We’re all mercenaries here, so I hope we get a chance to work together in the future.”

Silver Moon was indeed an expert... at flattering others. His flattery was filled with technical and in-depth gaming terms, and Gu Fei did not even know about some of the things that Silver Moon had mentioned. But seeing Royal God Call and War Without Wounds’ ecstatic reaction, he knew that Silver Moon’s praises had touched on the truth.

Following this, they headed to Ray’s Bar to celebrate their success at making it through another round. As for Royal God Call and War Without Wounds, the two insisted that they were just pretending moments ago and openly expressed their disdain toward Silver Moon now.

“Hmph! That trash is not even in my sight,” Royal God Call disdained as he fixed his gaze straight ahead.

“It seems like he is no longer taking that matter in Yueye City to heart. If that’s the case, then that man is rather magnanimous,” Brother Assist said.

Young Master Han laughed coldly, “Magnanimous? It’s more like he’s a shrewd person. He tried to entrap us many times in today’s match, but Miles fortunately has the Blink skill. Otherwise, the match might not have ended well for us.”

“Entrap us? How so?” Royal God Call asked.

“By luring us into engaging them in melee,” Young Master Han replied, adding, “Attacking them from afar was useless, as their defense was too strong. That’s why I said it was a situation where you know you are at a disadvantage, but you still have to purposely fall for their trap.”

“Tsk! We could have dragged the match on to see who had more patience,” Royal God Call said.

“I don’t really mind,” Young Master Han stretched himself languidly, “It’s just that someone might grow impatient and start acting recklessly once he found out that dragging the match would cause him to be late for the upcoming guild match at 9 P.M.”

“Ahh...” Royal God Call was stunned, instantly remembering that he still had a guild match to participate later.

“And if we really dragged on for another two or three hours, there was still somebody else who might grow anxious since he only stays online for a short time everyday.” Young Master Han gazed over at Gu Fei.

“That’s why I hurried to kill them all!” Gu Fei clenched his fists.

Everyone grew dispirited once he said this. Almost all the enemies this match were handily defeated by Gu Fei. Even if they provided assistance from the sidelines, it was still nothing in comparison to Gu Fei’s achievements.

Royal God Call cried out in agony when he saw Sword Demon taking out the booklet for the record of their contributions.

“Actually, the biggest harvest we have gained from this match is that we managed to find out everything about Silver Moon’s skill, don’t you all think so?” Young Master Han remarked.

The others immediately agreed that the most important contribution for this match was information collection as they demanded for it to be assigned high points.

“It was through my strategic planning that let us uncover the secret behind Silver Moon’s skill. Give me some points for that,” Young Master Han told Sword Demon.

“That was quite the complicated equation I had to calculate. I should get more points for that,” Brother Assist patted Sword Demon.

“I bore that attack to get the data needed to make the calculation,” War Without Wounds reported his contribution, as well.

Sword Demon nodded his head, “I got attacked to gather that bit of data, too!”

“Me? What about me?!” Royal God Call was flustered. In that moment, he could not think of what he had contributed in this last match.

“You lent me the booklet and quill I used,” Brother Assist waved that booklet he had used to do the calculation.

“That’s right!” Royal God Call’s agony turned into joy.

“Miles did not even contribute a bit to this. He he he!” Everyone gloatingly regarded Gu Fei.

Gu Fei originally did not wish to squabble for the contribution points with the others, as unlike them, he was not very particular about this small stuff in a game. But seeing their gloating expression, Gu Fei knew that they were deliberately making things bad for him and that he should not let them succeed, so he asked, “I will be awarded many points if I manage to get concrete information about that skill, right?”

“Of course! You will get lots of points for that, too!” Royal God Call automatically answered.

“Give me a quill and paper,” Gu Fei reached out his hand.

“What for?”

“I have information,” Gu Fei replied.

Everyone was suspicious. Brother Assist tore out a page from the booklet and passed it to Gu Fei along with a quill.

Gu Fei huddled over the table and began writing on the paper. When he was done, he lifted the paper up, “This is a 100% accurate and detailed report.”

All regarded Gu Fei suspiciously as they took the paper from him.

[King’s Blade

Additional skill: Activates the battlefield aura ‘King’s Command’.

Effect: Party members within the area of effect will have all their stats increased by 15%. Consumes 4% of mana every second it remains active.

Skill cool-down time: 10 minutes]

Not only did Gu Fei state the skill description, he even wrote down the figures for basic attack of King’s Blade as well as the ‘additional +8 to all stats’ trait of it.

“You’ve fabricated something quite believable,” Royal God Call scoffed at it.

“It’s real,” Gu Fei slightly smiled.

“How do you know all this, then?” Royal God Call asked.

“I asked Vast Lushness about it,” Gu Fei replied.

They all froze on the spot. Brother Assist, who was doing the math in his head, almost exploded from anguish and he weakly slumped down on the sofa.

“How many points will I get for this?” Gu Fei asked Sword Demon.

Sword Demon sympathetically glanced at the others who had previously put their lives on the line for this information as he replied, “Most of the points will go to you.”

“Sword Demon, whose side are you on?!” Royal God Call

demanded in his frustration.

“Are you complaining to the person who’s keeping track of your contributions? That’s very bold of you,” Sword Demon lightly chided. He was well-versed in all sorts of rules and regulations in online games, so he naturally was not just a goody two-shoes.

“Ha ha ha... Sword Demon big bro, do you have enough liquor? How about another one on me?” Royal God Call backtracked.

Sword Demon waved him off. He then shredded the page with the record for today’s match and began writing anew. Gu Fei had killed the most – if not all – and had also provided the most detailed information, so almost 75% of the contribution points for this match would go to him.

All emerged pale-faced when they came around to look.

“Dear students, you will only end up hurting yourself when you hurt others! Remember this well! I’m taking my leave now!” Gu Fei stood up and made his way out of the room.

“Hey, wait!” Recalling something, Brother Assist hurriedly chased after the departing Gu Fei.

“What’s the matter?” Gu Fei appeared before Brother Assist with a swish, giving the latter a fright.

“There’s something I need your help for once today’s guild match is over. Are you going offline now?” Brother Assist asked.

“It’s still early so I won’t go offline yet. What’s up?”

Brother Assist patted him on the arm, saying, “I’ll tell you when the time comes. You do your thing first!”

Everyone in the room stared at Brother Assist after Gu Fei left.

Brother Assist’s smile right now was particularly wretched, “Our business is doing well! We will have quite a few clienteles coming tonight to negotiate.”

“Alright! Let’s properly earn a pile of money from him as

revenge!” Royal God Call bellowed.

Chapter 199 - Gu Fei's Meet and Greet The Prelude

Royal God Call was the only member of Young Master's Elite that still had to participate in the guild versus guild tournament after the mercenary PvP tournament.

With Gu Fei's departure, Brother Assist started making preparations at Ray's Bar. Royal God Call was afraid to be left out, so he repeatedly told the others to wait for his return before beginning the event.

"Don't worry! We will wait for you!" Brother Assist thumped his chest. Only after he said this did Royal God Call feel assured enough to take his leave and participate in the guild versus guild tournament.

Brother Assist had long made plans for this business venture and had even roped in the bar owner, Ray. At Ray's arrangement, the left side of the bar was assigned to the tavern patrons, whereas the right was assigned to the clients coming over tonight. Brother Assist tasked War Without Wounds with arranging the benches and tables and tidying up the space until it resembled a press conference venue.

The present patrons in the bar naturally became curious of all these activities and inquired about the matter, but Brother Assist merely smiled mysteriously at them.

War Without Wounds, who had been doing all the hard work of rearranging the furniture to create the desired scene, asked, "Must we make it into such a big deal?"

"This is a marketing strategy," Brother Assist replied, "Only when you put value to your product that you'll be able to create a desire in others to buy it."

Young Master Han poked his head out of their room while

holding a glass of liquor and said, “Marketing? More like you’re playing a trick! Making it so grand... Are you trying to tease Miles to death or get him to kill us all?!”

“That’s right!” War Without Wounds agreed, “You should’ve just arranged for them to meet Miles individually. Gathering so many people together, let alone Miles, even the clients will feel displeased!”

“Everyone will definitely like it more if they can meet Miles singly, but how are we gonna fool Miles into doing that? I think it’s only possible to trick Miles this one time, so we might as well reveal his identity as 27149 to others in one go,” Brother Assist reasoned.

“You better be careful, then. You’re currently playing with fire by negotiating with almost all the major forces here in Yunduan City. All it takes is for a handful of them to feel dissatisfied by your actions and your peaceful days in this city are as good as over,” Young Master Han cautioned.

“Don’t worry.” Brother Assist smiled craftily, “I’ve already spoken to them. In a way, making a grand gathering like this is to let the others understand that it isn’t easy to meet this mysterious Mage of ours, so they’ll be more than happy to part with their money once they realize that it’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

“How much are you charging them?” Young Master Han asked.

“Just 100 gold coins per person. It’s pretty cheap, eh?” Brother Assist replied.

“Indeed, 100 gold coins is just loose change to these influential players,” Young Master Han nodded his head.

“So how much can we earn from this whole thing?” This was actually what War Without Wounds was most concerned about.

“Ha ha!” Brother Assist laughed heartily, “One hundred twenty-two guilds and twenty-seven mercenary groups have expressed

their interest in this. How much do you think that gives us?”

“14900 gold coins!” War Without Wounds exclaimed.

“You’ve attracted that many people this soon? Your efficiency is pretty high!” Young Master Han commended.

“It’s all thanks to Carouse and Cloud Herder causing so much ruckus in these past two days. Their flyers littering the streets really helped us by quite a lot,” Brother Assist chuckled softly.

“Then, why today? Wouldn’t we earn more if we waited for a few more days?” Young Master Han asked.

“Now is the time. Carouse’s and Cloud Herder’s advertisement has successfully piqued everyone’s curiosity. When this moment of interest passes, I’m certain many people will just look on in this. This kind of business is a one-time thing. How much we can earn out of this is all that matters. Let’s not fuss over how much more we can earn by biding our time; otherwise, we risk losing the entire pot,” Brother Assist answered.

As Young Master Han and Brother Assist continued to debate over the matter, War Without Wounds counted how much they could earn with his fingers.

So how much will I get from that 14900 gold coins? War Without Wounds calculated it in his mind as he threw a sidelong glance at Sword Demon, “This is a windfall gifted by the heavens! Are you sure you’re not gonna join us?”

Sword Demon chuckled, “Count me out of this! I’m leaving now.”

“I won’t be sending you off, then!” War Without Wounds absolutely did not plan to persuade him otherwise. One less person involved meant one less portion to share the pot with. Meaning, he could take more for himself. This was the simple thought he had. Hearing such a large sum involved, he even wished that everyone had no part in this and that he had organized the matter alone.

Thinking of this, he could not help but feel grateful that Brother Assist had actually involved them in this big venture. Accomplishing this task evidently did not require fighting, so Brother Assist only needed himself to do this. To have involved us in this, what a brother he is! War Without Wounds was in awe of how generous Brother Assist was. He then decided to send Royal God Call this message: “Oi. Are you still coming? We’re about to begin; we ain’t got the time to wait for you!”

“What, what, what?! It’s only been five minutes and you guys are already starting? You’re all doing this intentionally!” Royal God Call felt alarmed as he was still fighting in the guild match.

“Can’t be help! Customer is always right. Some things are just out of our control,” War Without Wounds continued to spout nonsense. His goal was really to get Royal God Call so flustered that the latter would yell out, “Fine! Do what you guys want, then! I’m out!”

Unfortunately for him, the runt Royal God Call was not that rash. He calmly pondered the pros and cons of the matter and finally decided to abandon the guild versus guild tournament. Using the excuse that he needed to visit the latrine due to a bout of diarrhea, he volunteered to be killed off. Once he was out of the PvP arena, he sprinted toward Ray’s Bar.

When Royal God Call entered the establishment, he immediately saw that the left side was filled with people while the right side was empty save for Brother Assist and Young Master Han who were drinking and chatting together. The two were very surprised to see him be back at the bar this fast.

Brother Assist looked at the time, “Done so soon? Has Traversing Four Seas gotten that strong? I recall that you guys are matched up against a level 4 guild today. Surely, it shouldn’t have been that quick?”

Royal God Call spotted War Without Wounds laughing

uproariously in his peripheral view. Knowing that he had been had, Royal God Call furiously fired off arrows at War Without Wounds.

“I’m not healing either of you!” Young Master Han told the two firmly.

The two promptly did not go overboard with their attacks in fear of accidentally killing the other. Although they were hoping for the other to die, they did not want to be the killer themselves. They were merely hoping that the other would get surrounded by monsters and killed off, get ambushed to death by random players, or accidentally die from friendly fire.

Royal God Call shelved his anger for the moment as he looked around to see how the bar was arranged, asking just like the clueless players over by the left side. “Just what’s going on?”

“We’re gathering all of the clients for one meet and greet,” Brother Assist answered, turning to War Without Wounds after, “You have a very important job, and that is to keep an eye on Miles and make sure he doesn’t escape. Once he realizes that something is off and tries to leave, it’s your duty to hold him down even if he kills you. Now that we’re at this point, we will have to ignore his wishes on this matter!”

War Without Wounds’ expression darkened, “That’s a very dangerous task!”

Brother Assist nodded his head solemnly, “Don’t worry. You’ll properly be compensated for this, monetary-wise.”

“If I’m really killed, no amount of money will make up for it.”

“Whenever there’s an opportunity to earn a large sum, you guys must keep in mind that a certain amount risk is always involved,” Brother Assist said.

“Why do I feel that all the danger involved in this is placed on my shoulders?” War Without Wounds wailed.

“You’re the only one with Strength capable of holding Miles down! As a precaution, we’ve gathered some equipment with magic defense for you to wear. If that ever happens, I’ll grant you Blessing of Vitality, while Young Master will be ready to bestow Heal on you. Relax!” Brother Assist reassured.

With that said, the rest handed over their magic defense equipment to War Without Wounds. Temporarily taking off his heavy armor as well as his accessories, he put on the set of mismatched trinkets and gear. The equipment that everyone had provided him was surprisingly form-fitting, so it tightly hugged War Without Wounds’ brawny frame, giving birth to the most unique Warrior anyone could ever lay eyes on.

“This is a stain to my very existence!” War Without Wounds lowered his head in absolute shame. His feeling toward the Warrior job class was similar to Royal God Call’s love for the Mage job class. Such an oddly dressed Warrior was something that he could not accept. What was worse was the fact that the said Warrior was him.

“Just hang in there. Safety should be your first priority,” Brother Assist said solemnly, trying his best to stifle his laughter.

The four men then proceeded to go over the particulars of today’s operation, while Boss Ray maintained order in the pub.

When it was time for the operation to commence, Brother Assist mumbled to himself, “People should be arriving now.”

Just as he finished muttering this, someone kicked in the door of Ray’s Bar open, “M*th*rf*ck*r, I’ve finally found the place. I’m on the verge of dying just from searching for this place.”

Brother Assist and the lot turned their heads over and were stunned.

Three men entered the bar together. The one at the head was the present big boss of Yueye City and was rumored to be the head of

the Ten Guild Alliance: Dusky Cloud.

Dusky Cloud also spotted the four men and he cheerfully approached them, “I knew that you guys are behind this. Pretty shrewd of you guys to think of such a method to earn money.” Placing his hand inside his pocket, he tossed a coin pouch on the table, “I heard it’s 100 gold coins? There you go! You can count the content for yourselves!” He wrung his hands as he said this, casually finding a seat over by a corner as he looked all around, “I’ve long wanted to get to know this eminent bro... So where is he? Is he coming soon?”

Brother Assist and the rest were still in a daze, not one of them moving to the coin pouch on the table. Royal God Call recovered himself first and looked over to Brother Assist, “D*mn! To think that this matter has even spread outside of the city!”

Brother Assist was evidently very surprised, “Those who are coming have contacted me first, yet this lot actually ran all the way over without saying a word to me.”

“This means that they may not be the only one like that,” Young Master Han proffered.

“Ah. Looks like we won’t just earn 14900 gold coins! No wait, it should be 15000 gold coins now,” War Without Wounds said as he stared at the coin pouch on the table with greed-filled eyes.

Chapter 200 - Clients from All Over

Having the ability to insta-kill a bunch of men with a raise of his hand, such an indomitable Mage was truly a rare specimen.

Dusky Cloud and his gang had long wanted to get in touch with the masked Mage that had helped them out greatly in the war against Past Deeds in Yueye City, so when they saw on the forums that an opportunity to get acquainted with the mysterious Mage was present, they hurriedly traveled from Yueye City to Yunduan City.

“You guys have traveled so far. Still, don’t you have to participate in the PvP tournament in your own city,” Brother Assist tried to break the ice with the three new arrivals who had journeyed for three hours from Yueye City to Yunduan City just to meet Gu Fei.

Dusky Cloud laughed boisterously, “With our mercenary group and guild’s strength, losing the three of us won’t affect the outcome of the matches in the least.” He swept his gaze over the empty seats in the bar, “You’ve arranged for such a big event. I suppose a lot of people will be attending this?”

Brother Assist nodded his head.

Dusky Cloud once more gazed at everyone before him and asked, “Where’s brother Sword Demon? Why don’t I see him?” Sword Demon had fought side by side with them back in Yueye City, so they were more familiar with him.

“He has something on, so he won’t be coming,” Brother Assist fibbed.

“It’s rare for me to come by for a visit; we should all come together and have a drink or two once this is over!” Dusky Cloud declared.

Young Master Han was obviously the most thrilled over his

suggestion to drink, but he had a slight altercation with Dusky Cloud in Yueye City.

Thinking that it was important to choose his drinking partners as well, Young Master Han kept quiet about his suggestion when he would usually be approving with two thumbs up.

The rest of them were quite indifferent to Dusky Cloud's suggestion, as the various guild leaders and mercenary group leaders of Yunduan City started trickling in the bar. Brother Assist hurriedly stood up from his seat and began welcoming each new arrival.

Welcoming the clients was actually only secondary and his main purpose was really to collect the 100 gold coins fee from the guests as he ushered them to their seats.

Not everyone responded similarly when this happened. Some unhesitatingly handed over their coin pouches, while others fussed about this being an elaborate scam and expressed their wish to part with their coins only when they saw the subject in question.

Some attempted to curry favor from him when they saw this by handing over their coin pouches and loudly saying, "I believe you just from the fact that you are Brother Assist."

Young Master Han only realized now that the success of this business venture was not just due to Carouse's and Cloud Herder's two days of madness but also due to Brother Assist's fame as an information expert. Truly, Brother Assist's influence on the forums was not something to scoff at.

Brother Assist patiently coaxed those who were still unwilling to pay upfront, "You are all leaders or influential figures in our city!? How am I going to live peacefully in this city from here onward if this is truly an attempt to scam you all out of your money?"

Some found his explanation sound and happily handed over their coin pouches, yet a few were still unwilling to do so.

Brother Assist could not help but wonder if those refusing to pay were the real scammers who tried to find out who the mysterious Mage was for free, instead. He was the ‘seller’ who should be collecting the entrance fees from the attendees, but he would truly have no choice if any of them chose not to fork out their money after the conference was over. It was only 100 gold coins, after all. Gathering reinforcement just to get away from paying this paltry sum would be an awkward proposition to pose to their friends! It would also be very demeaning to boot.

“But what if you do meet someone like that?” Young Master Han, who had predicted such a situation, asked Brother Assist this earlier.

“I guess we can just ask them to leave,” was Brother Assist’s answer.

At this moment, Brother Assist calmly said to the players who were unwilling to pay the fee, “Guys, the rule here is for you to pay the fee first before meeting the Mage. Many other leaders have already paid the fee. Won’t it be unfair to them if you guys refuse to do the same? If you still insist on not paying up, then please excuse yourselves.” He politely indicated the door.

Someone felt slighted by this. Slapping the table, he stood up and began shouting at Brother Assist. He also attempted to incite the other leaders by claiming how illogical it was for him to collect the fee before even showing them the product in question and that everyone should join up to protect their rights.

“What if someone attempts to create uproar? What will you do?” Young Master Han had also predicted such men to turn up for this meeting.

“It would be dangerous if the price we set was 1000 gold coins; fortunately, the price we set is only 100 gold coins. Most leaders here are influential characters that would think nothing of this price. Only those insignificant shrimps would actually create a

scene for this bit of money, so there's nothing to worry about," Brother Assist answered.

The other leaders barely reacted to this cry of solidarity from the shrimp, causing Brother Assist to smile in relief. The shrimp was filled with resentment and was about to go into a full-on tirade when someone suddenly stood up and banged the table.

Just as the shrimp was feeling gratified that his words had finally affected someone in the crowd, the man pointed straight at him and cursed, "F*ck! You're noisy. Who are you, anyway? If you're unwilling to pay the fee, then get the f*ck out!"

"Boss Innocent, please don't say it like that. You see, I'm just trying to..." The shrimp was just some unknown player, while the man who had stood up was a leader that everyone knew and recognized. The man was someone that even the shrimp knew about. Unfortunately for the shrimp, the man, as well as the other influential leaders, turned a deaf ear to his words, with some even glaring hatefully at him.

It was just as what Brother Assist had said earlier... Would there be a way for anyone to live peacefully in Yunduan City if they offended all these leaders? Seeing that the crowd was against him, the shrimp immediately shut his mouth and hurriedly slinked out of the bar.

Out of all those men who had refused to pay the fee upfront, two left immediately, while the rest finally forked out the 100 gold coins and stayed.

Although this was but a small episode, it helped reduce the amount of work for Brother Assist from here on out. Any players that came afterward and showed reluctance to pay the 100 gold coins upfront received a stern glare from all the leaders present, allowing Brother Assist to swiftly collect the money from them.

Of course, there were still the regular patrons who were hanging out inside the bar. Having wised up to the fact that they had just

spent money just to catch a glimpse of this mysterious Mage while these tavern patrons could do so for free, the leaders of different groups turned their glares toward these curious onlookers, as well.

These onlookers more or less understood the reason behind the piercing stares after watching everything unfold for so long, so most of them began to leave the premise. There were ten among these tavern patrons who had grown curious over this matter and had the money for the fee, so they expressed their intention to stay and paid Brother Assist 100 gold coins. This unexpected windfall made War Without Wounds, who was hiding in a corner, very happy that he could not stop his mouth from forming a wide grin.

Why was he hiding in a corner? It was because he felt so embarrassed by his attire that he could not bring himself to stand in front of the crowd and be seen.

After everything had settled, the entire Ray's Bar had ended up becoming the stage for this conference. Everyone noisily rearranged the seats once more, making it more spacious and comfortable for all.

No one else entered the bar after waiting for quite some time. Although it was still a while before the appointed time, all were already impatiently asking Brother Assist to start things early.

"Some people have yet to arrive." Brother Assist smiled, "We will begin at the exact appointed time, so everyone please indulge in a drink or two. It's on me."

All the leaders did not say much after. Having spent 100 gold coins just to sit here, they were not exactly thrilled at the prospect of getting a few free drinks since since the amount they had just paid would surely cover the expenses of a few mere drinks.

It was at this moment when the bar doors were pushed open from the outside and a fully geared Warrior quietly stepped in. Everyone seated recognized this person as Black Index Finger, the group leader of the largest mercenary group in Yunduan City.

Black Index Finger did not say much. Casually looking for a spot to sit on once he entered, he placed a coin pouch on the table and allowed Brother Assist to pick it up whenever he liked.

All started to whisper among themselves. Another person came right after, and it was someone whose name was recently gaining popularity in Yunduan City: Silver Moon. He brought his two fellow mates along with him and warmly greeted Brother Assist and the others, “To think we would meet so soon.”

“You, too...” Brother Assist was quite surprised. Silver Moon and Gu Fei were already acquainted, so there was no need for him to be here!

Silver Moon did not say another word and just handed over the fee, getting himself a seat.

Four ladies of Amethyst Rebirth entered the bar together, too. They were July, Luo Luo, Svelte Dancer, and Lie Lie.

This group’s appearance here made Brother Assist feel surreal. They were already familiar with Gu Fei, so what were they doing here?

They casually paid up the 100 gold coins as Svelte Dancer glanced at Brother Assist, “Let’s see what you guys are up to this time!”

A Mage, Fighter, and Thief entered the bar next. Before Brother Assist could say anything, Royal God Call already leaped to his feet and addressed the newcomer, “What are you doing here?!”

“Insta-killing Mage! Naturally, I wish to get to know this person,” the Mage smilingly replied.

“Who are you?” Brother Assist came forward and asked.

“Drifting,” the person answered as he lifted a coin pouch to pay.

The whole bar immediately burst into activity. Unlike Svelte Dancer’s showy appearance to Yunduan City due to her membership to Amethyst Rebirth, few people knew that the Mage

Drifting had come to the same city, as well.

All the leaders' blood immediately boiled. This sort of talent was also someone that they had prioritized as potential recruit!

Some players looked at Drifting for a bit before they glanced at Svelte Dancer, wondering if there would be any sparks between the two players who were part of the Five Unyielding Experts. Sadly, the two did not even deign to exchange words with each other.

Instead, it was the quarrelsome Royal God Call who pointed to Brother Assist Drifting's coin pouch as he shouted, "Take it! Quickly take it!" Inside, Royal God Call was rejoicing, Let him spend 100 gold coins, only to discover that the person is someone he already knows! Ha ha ha! This is gonna be great!

Once Drifting handed the coins over and took a seat, a beautiful lady entered the bar. Looking around, she muttered, "I should have done this sooner." As she took out her coin pouch, someone from the crowd of leaders stood up and pointed at her.

The lady awakened from her dream with shock, "Oh, yeah... This sort of public method will never work for me." The lady then hurriedly made her escape, leaving Brother Assist, who was about to extend his hand to take her coins, at a total loss.

In no time at all, the bar door was pushed open once more and the guild leader of Yunduan City's largest guild, Oathless Sword, came in. Behind him were his two long-time partners, Youthful Reflection and Gale Force.

"Hmph! So many people!" Oathless Sword had the air of a leader of a large guild. Walking in majestically and picking a seat, he tossed a coin pouch over to Brother Assist and asked, "Shall we begin?"

Brother Assist caught it and nodded his head, "Please wait a moment." With that, he sent Gu Fei a message, "Come over to

Ray's Bar for a bit!"

"Oh? How coincidental. I am actually on my way there!" Gu Fei said.

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